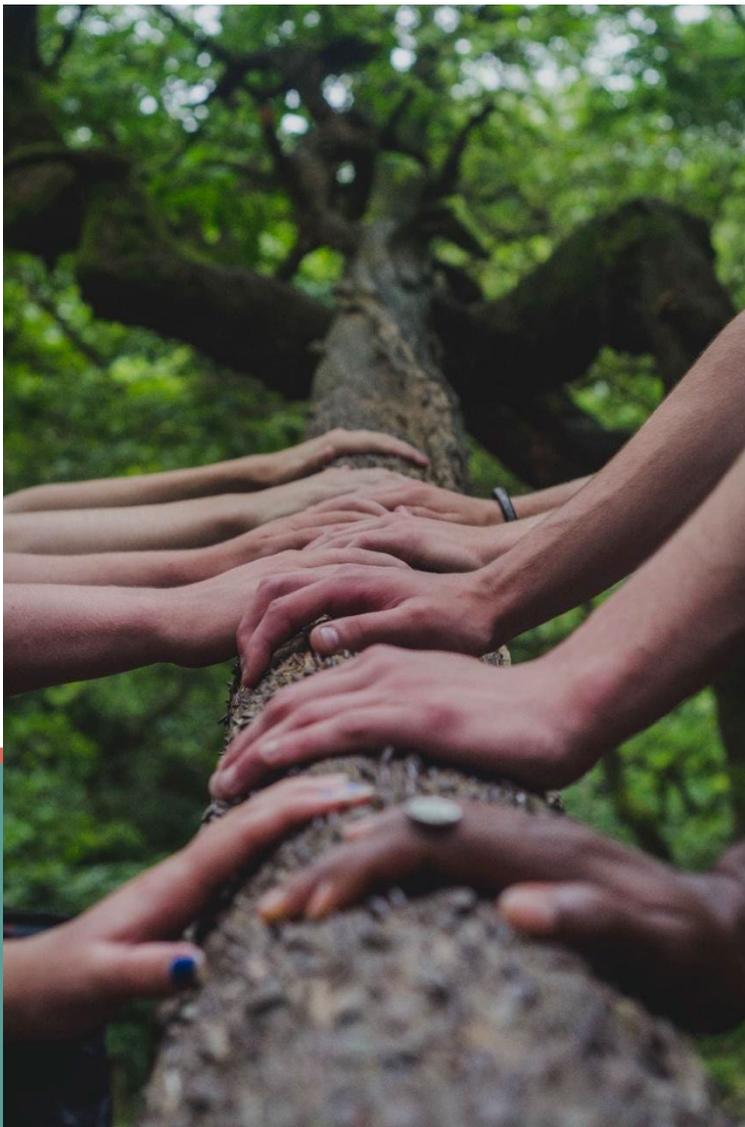


Children, Youth & Families Department

STATE OF NEW MEXICO



**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
PLAN**

INTRODUCTION

The New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD) aims to build a strong, competent workforce and understands that a trauma-responsive and culturally relevant child and family service system is one that can recognize and respond to the diverse needs of children and families. CYFD sets a high standard for a healthy workforce and will strive to meet this goal through multiple initiatives.

A strong child welfare workforce is comprised of individuals who have a relevant education, are well-trained in the discipline, and possess specific professional skills as well as excellent relational skills and critical thinking. These individuals must possess an understanding of child and adolescent development, mental health, substance abuse and other social problems, and family and community systems. Employees must receive thorough, high-quality pre-service new employee training, as well as relevant ongoing training to further professional development and meet evolving agency priorities. A healthy workforce is valued, adequately compensated, and has opportunities for growth, development, and advancement within the agency. A healthy workforce is broad in its scope and includes staff of all levels of education, training, and skills, as well as professional, para-professional and lived experience to meet the needs of the children, youth, and families we serve. The individuals who comprise a healthy workforce are invested in their communities and embrace cultural humility.

A healthy workforce also includes supervisors and managers who demonstrate both personal and positional respect and leadership. Supervisors’ relationships with staff should be transformational, not transactional. These relationships are based on a mutually shared mission and vision, allowing for individual approaches that are part of a collaborative effort to meet client goals and needs. Leadership has a responsibility to nurture, support, and develop employees while being attuned and attentive to the individualized strengths, needs, and experiences of their team.

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OBJECTIVE

The objective of CYFD Protective Services' Workforce Development Plan is to provide concrete strategies to reduce vacancies and turnover in the workforce, thereby meeting reasonable caseload standards; identify opportunities to recruit a suitable and diverse workforce; streamline hiring practices; increase support for field workers to serve clients better; provide a clear plan for improving training and skill development for new and tenured employees; and develop a pathway for the frontline staff of today to become our organization's strong, innovative leaders of tomorrow.

This document will be updated regularly to include progress made on planned initiatives, emerging needs that are identified, and unforeseen barriers or unintended consequences of workforce development projects.

The Director of CYFD's Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO) has been assigned to develop, implement, and oversee a project management plan for this Workforce Development Plan. It is anticipated that this additional structure and oversight will facilitate the successful and timely implementation of the plan.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT WORKFORCE: STAFF SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

In April 2022, the Division of Performance and Accountability sent a comprehensive survey to Protective Services staff at all levels of the organization. The survey collected demographic information as well as Likert-scaled items pertaining to multiple dimensions of job satisfaction within child welfare, including:

- Training and professional development;
- Organizational factors;
- Job-related safety;
- Workload and expectations;
- Self-care;
- Physical working conditions;
- Workplace cohesion;
- Agency mission;
- Rewards and recognition;
- Supervision frequency and availability; and
- Supervision quality.

The five items for each domain were stated positively. Respondents were prompted to indicate their level of agreement with each item as well as to rate the relative importance of that item to their overall job satisfaction. This allowed for the survey results to be analyzed using a weighted gap analysis, with high levels of disagreement weighted in the results more heavily when the item was also collectively rated as highly important. Each of the domains, and each item within the domains, were assigned a score, as shown in **Appendix 1. Higher scores indicate higher priority for the agency** in addressing that domain/item regarding staff satisfaction and retention.

Weighted Gap Analysis Composite Score	Domain
0.986	Training & Professional Development
1.546	Organizational Factors
0.820	Job-Related Safety
1.559	Workload & Expectations
1.596	Self-Care
0.051	Physical Working Conditions
1.320	Workplace Cohesion
0.769	Agency Mission
1.472	Rewards & Recognition
0.594	Supervision Frequency & Availability
0.580	Supervision Quality

Each domain is summarized below and includes select qualitative data. **High priority** domains or items mean that the domain or item described ranks in the highest top third of all scores; **moderate priority** describes domains or items that are in the middle third; and **lower priority** indicates that the domain or item was in the bottom third of scores. Some domains scored relatively well but had individual items scored with very high priority within them; those circumstances are noted below.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY

The survey was distributed in April 2022 to the entire Protective Services workforce via email. About 840 staff received the survey. Staff were given two weeks to complete the survey and provided with two reminders. At the time of closing, the survey had 322 responses, with varying degrees of completion. As only 214 respondents completed the survey in full, each domain was analyzed separately. Response counts for each section are provided below.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

320 responses were submitted for this section. The domain overall scored as a **moderate priority**; however, the specific item *"I received adequate training prior to performing my job"* scored as the seventh-highest priority item in the survey, making it a **high priority**. As described by staff:

"There is a lack of actual real field training for workers to be able to work their cases in a competent way, you could ask the same question to different workers and get several different answers from them of what to do."

"Please provide more training on how to build capacity in employees, more professional development, effective corrective strategies, etc."

"CPS needs ... to REALLY train staff on how to do their job. If you aren't trained properly, you don't know how to do your job, so you quit because no one likes being in the dark when it comes to a job."

"Time and time again I hear from workers, 'I did not learn or use anything I was taught from [New Employee Training], I learn more in the field than anything.' Workers are often times expected to hit the ground running once they are cleared from [New Employee Training] however, how can this be if they are not getting adequate training that they will need in the field?"

"It would be beneficial to have position-specific training."

However, other items within this domain indicate that staff are generally more satisfied with ongoing training opportunities. Of note, dissatisfaction with the lack of opportunities for advancement within the organization ranked 14th in items overall:

"I would like to see more advancement opportunities within certain tiers of jobs. Especially for those of us who have been dedicated to the Department for several years. We feel stuck with no room for advancement or pay."

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS

This domain, which had 318 responses, is determined to be a **high priority** for the agency to promote worker retention. The domain is concerned with the flexibility, self-direction, and staff involvement in work-related decisions as they occur within the bureaucratic hierarchy. Notably, the item *"Rules, policies, and procedures are interpreted and applied in a consistent way"* was scored as the **highest priority** in this domain. CYFD has created a centralized Policy Office under the Office of the Secretary with a Policy Director and two staff. This office is beginning the process of centralizing, updating, and

compiling all agency policies, procedures, administrative codes, rules, memorandums, directives, etc. This completely new Policy Office is anticipated to have an extremely significant, positive impact on the consistency of rule, policy and procedure application. Survey comments mentioned several related organizational factors that impact employee retention within the agency:

"There are constantly new changes and policies we must comply with on top of everything we are already doing. It can feel discouraging at times."

"There needs to be more consistency in policy implementation between tiers of management."

"We layer and layer new approaches without ever shedding layers that no longer work effectively."

"There are so many 'initiatives' and 'pilot projects' that I've heard about incidentally rather than as part of system-wide communication; it's difficult to know how all of the parts of CYFD work together."

"When thinking 'outside the box' and forming ideas, [workers] have been dismissed or ignored."

By their nature, bureaucratic organizations can themselves become inherent obstacles in promoting flexible solutions to unforeseen challenges. Leadership strives to model a culture of inclusivity and adaptability with input encouraged from individual counties through County Retention Plans. Counties are in the process of designing plans to address their unique local needs.

JOB-RELATED SAFETY

315 responses to the items comprising this domain were submitted. About a quarter of respondents disagreed to some extent with the statement *"I seldom feel threatened by hostile clientele on the job,"* with frontline staff most likely to disagree. However, most respondents reported that the agency overall encourages productive partnerships with coworkers and law enforcement when appropriate. This domain was identified as a **moderate priority** due to the importance that respondents placed on job-related safety and the fact that the work, for many staff, is inherently high-risk. The agency should continue to make efforts to reduce risk of harm to staff and ensure that elective safety protocols are in place where needed.

WORKLOAD AND EXPECTATIONS

This domain had 318 responses and scored as a **high priority** area for staff retention. Most respondents, regardless of position within the agency, disagreed with the statement *"I am usually able to keep up with my workload within a regular work week,"*. Respondents stated:

"I love what I do within CYFD. I do feel that our workload as well as everything required is not manageable. It is impossible to attend all these trainings, meetings, home visits, and yet provide good quality customer service to our clients."

"I truly enjoy my job. I believe my contribution makes a positive impact. The workload is often unrealistic and at times I feel overwhelmed with all the new procedural changes."

SELF-CARE

This domain was identified not only as **high priority**, but its composite score was the **highest** among the 318 responses to this domain.

Correcting the agency's overall culture around self-care—a critical component of job satisfaction in a crisis-driven field such as child welfare—will need to be a fundamental pillar of worker retention.

Promoting an environment of genuine, restorative self-care shall be integrated into every aspect of agency life, across all practice areas and hierarchical levels.

The most pressing item in this domain, according to its weighted gap analysis score, is *"My office has a debriefing protocol in place for circumstances that are likely to cause secondary trauma."* More than a third of respondents strongly disagreed with this statement, expressing sentiments such as:

"There isn't a system of support for WORKERS—protocol for debriefing tough cases/situations and discharging vicarious trauma."

Details on the agency's planned initiative to address this deficit are included in the Retention section of this Plan.

Overall work-life balance was also identified as a significant issue in the survey. As staff plainly put it:

"We are made to put our personal life on hold and work on holidays, weekends, nights, and through the day ... When on personal leave it is exhausting knowing my cases are going to not be taken care of and decisions are going to be made that are counterproductive."

"We are unable to provide the best of ourselves to any one purpose because we are stretched too thin. When self-care is encouraged, it is meant as long as it doesn't interfere with your work."

Leadership training and development—as well as guidance for County Recruitment Plans—will include specific research-informed strategies for fostering a healthier culture of self-care for all staff.

PHYSICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

The agency performed well on this domain in terms of overall respondent satisfaction and monitoring physical workspaces and the impact this section has on job satisfaction. 310 respondents rated physical working conditions as relatively important. Teleworking had been the norm for most staff since March of 2020 but was not measured by this survey. As staff begin to return to office-based work, it will be crucial to monitor physical workspaces and the impact this section has on job satisfaction. At this time, this domain is rated as a **lower priority**.

WORKPLACE COHESION

This domain addresses "workplace culture" that influences worker satisfaction. There were 312 responses to the items in this domain.

Overall, workplace cohesion ranked as a **moderate priority** for staff retention considerations. The individual item in this domain with the highest weighted gap analysis score was *"When staff in my office have an issue with a coworker, most will address it directly with that person and avoid talking behind his/her back."* Communication issues are not unique to child welfare but can certainly lead to toxicity if not addressed courageously. Staff noted:

"Favoritism is highly problematic and has been since I started and long before. It would be great for leaders to see the experience and knowledge as valuable."

"The agency operates in crisis mode, much like our families."

Favoritism and unfairness were also perceived by some staff across all levels of the agency. Acknowledging it allows for leaders to begin the process of modeling a more inclusive, person-centered work environment.

AGENCY MISSION

This domain ranked as a **moderate priority** and had the most varied responses to the items that comprise it. While over 85% of the domain's 316 respondents agreed with the statement *"I feel I am a good fit with this agency and its overall purpose,"* over a third disagreed that *"Agency leadership is genuinely dedicated to progress, and improvements where needed."* Like all state agencies, CYFD undergoes administration changes frequently which necessitates time. The current administration has

taken a thoughtful and methodical approach to developing an actionable understanding of organizational and systemic challenges including statewide travel. Thus far, Secretary Vigil has made 18 visits to Pueblos and offices and has planned at least an additional 15 visits in 2023.

Child welfare work continues to inspire and motivate many staff:

"I agree with the mission and vision of CYFD but lack of manpower is causing it not to be met."

"I get so much satisfaction from the things I can do to help children. That aspect of my job is wonderful."

"Love my job, love working with the families and guiding my employees to advocate and support the community."

REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

While this **high priority** domain was ranked fourth overall, one item topped the list as being the **highest priority** of the survey's 55 total items. Of the domain's 316 respondents across all service areas of the agency, 60% disagreed with the statement: *"The compensation (salary and benefits) I receive is competitive with similar positions with other organizations."* In their words:

"Compensation for CYFD employees is low compared to other social work agencies, which coupled with a lack of appreciation from the community makes it difficult to work in these positions."

"The notion that [lack of] pay increases do not impact an individual's decision to join or stay with CYFD is entirely inaccurate ... The unfortunate reality is that CYFD will continue to lose employees if they are not compensated accurately for their work."

"It is unfair that we are not compensated for the number of years we have been working for the department. This feels like we are not appreciated for our loyalty to the department and for the work we do for our children and their families."

"I think that salary is a real issue. Many social workers find good-paying jobs outside the agency and that is why they do not stick around. The work is very hard and we should be appropriately compensated for it."

Pay increases and other compensation considerations are highly dependent on state statutory and legislative decisions. However, the input of staff on this issue is crucial and will not be ignored. The agency is committed to ongoing analysis of worker salaries using cost of living comparisons; exploration of opportunities to reward commitment to the agency as well as performance excellence; and improving pathways for staff to obtain advancement within the organization.

A state-wide 7% legislative increase was implemented in FY23. It is unclear whether or not this increase has improved staff retention.

SUPERVISION FREQUENCY AND AVAILABILITY

Because not all positions in the division have formal supervision as part of their job expectations, this domain had fewer respondents (216). This domain's score indicated it as a **lower priority** domain. Most respondents generally agreed that their *"supervision sessions are rarely interrupted"* and that overall, they have *"regular, dedicated time set up for one-on-one supervision."* The agency implemented a new supervisory framework in early 2020. While much of the early implementation relied on remote contact between supervisors and staff, the new supervisory framework has been successful in ensuring consistent support to workers.

SUPERVISION QUALITY

The 214 respondents for this domain seemed to agree that supervision quality is generally high, placing this domain as a **lower priority** for the agency. Most staff agreed that their supervisor encourages creative and critical thinking; involves them in case decision-making; and provides sufficient emotional support:

"As to recruitment and retention, the biggest support I have received is being listened to, heard, and supported by my supervisor."

"I can honestly say that I have the best supervisors ever."

It is important to note that a minority of staff (about 12% - 20%) did express disagreement with some or all the items related to supervision quality. Because supervision is a highly individualized practice that is dependent on interpersonal factors, this is to be expected; but the agency's ongoing leadership development strategies should consider those staff who have had less-than-positive experiences with supervision.

Currently, staff provide data regarding the frequency and quality of supervision via a monthly survey, and trainer-coaches routinely check in with staff to ensure they are getting the support they need in the field. Any issues identified are escalated to county leadership. Protective Services also plans to incorporate more specific language about expectations for supervision in agency procedure and include supervision practices as a job expectation to be rated in Manager Evaluations.

Furthermore, staff have the option of filing internal complaints about management to the Employee Relations Bureau in Human Resources, or a union grievance if they are in the collective bargaining unit. These complaints are thoroughly investigated and addressed, and if they reveal problems with individual supervisors, appropriate action, such as mentoring, counseling, placing the supervisor on a Performance Development Plan, or disciplinary action, is taken.

JOB OUTLOOK

To identify areas to target for improvement, one item in the survey asked respondents (n=300) to share their level of agreement with a set of statements about job outlook. The 300 responses are described below:

	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I look forward to coming to work most days.	31.67%	38.00%	17.33%	13.00%
I seldom think about leaving my job.	23.75%	23.08%	28.09%	25.08%
I see myself working for this agency for quite a long time.	35.35%	33.00%	16.84%	14.81%
I look forward to new opportunities this agency can provide in the future.	45.00%	28.33%	12.33%	14.33%
If I were to leave my specific position, I would want to stay with this agency.	36.33%	28.67%	17.00%	18.00%

SUMMARY

The Protective Services employee survey provided useful insights on staff job satisfaction and intent to stay with the agency. This assessment will be readministered annually to assess progress and determine if new employment and agency culture conditions have emerged as high priorities in addressing worker retention. Based on feedback from staff, new categories will be added to the next survey to address caseloads, lack of resources such as therapeutic and medical services, lack of durable foster placements, and lack of medical providers such as psychiatrists, pediatricians, and therapists. We plan to administer this survey annually at the same time each year through the pendency of the settlement agreement.

CASELOAD STANDARDS AND WORKFORCE NEEDS

INTRODUCTION

Key to providing high-quality, trauma-responsive services to a diverse array of vulnerable children and families is a manageable workload for frontline staff that allows sufficient attention to the complexity of child and family needs, while honoring individual staff needs for self-care, personal growth, and ongoing training. Although there is a distinction between caseload and workload—the former being more of a static limitation to numeric counts of children or families assigned to a given worker, and the later giving more consideration to case complexity and available supports to the worker—CYFD agrees that an empirical caseload standard is necessary to monitor the distribution of cases among staff; better understand the impact of vacancies and turnover on work quality and case outcomes; and to determine staffing needs at the state, regional, and county levels.

The agreed-upon 2023 caseload standards for Investigations, Permanency and Placement Workers are as follows:

<p>Investigation Case Workers</p>	<p>In 2023 and beyond the standard caseload standard will be no more than 12 cases (families) total; there will be no primary assignments in the first 2 months after completion of New Employee Training (NET); no more than 3 primary assignments at a time during months 3-4 after NET; and no more than 6 primary assignments at a time during months 5-6 after NET.</p>
<p>Permanency Planning Workers</p>	<p>There will be a maximum of 15 children on a caseload at a time; workers will be assigned as primary for no more than 5 children at a time for the 2 months after completion of NET (only transferred cases); no more than 8 primary assignments at a time during months 3-4 after NET (can include new cases); and no more than 12 primary assignments at a time during months 5-6 after NET.</p>
<p>Placement Workers</p>	<p>Effective July 1, 2022, the caseload standard for Placement Workers will be equal to: 15 adoption cases, or 20 licensed families, or 15 home studies. For workers with mixed caseloads, the standard will weight each piece of work. For example, each adoption case would equal 6.67% of a caseload (1 caseload divided by 15); each family would equal 5% of a caseload, and each home study would equal 6.67% of a caseload. There will be no more than 3-5 licensed family or adoption assignments to workers in months 1-2 following NET. No more than one home study will be assigned in months 1-2 following NET once a worker has completed the SAFE Home Study Training. No more than 5-8 licensed family or adoption cases and not more than 2 new home studies will be assigned during months 3-4 following NET, and no more than 10 licensed family or adoption cases and not more than 4 new home studies will be assigned during months 5-6 after NET. Following completion of month six, the worker can be assigned no more than 20 licensed family cases, or 15 adoption cases, or 15 home studies.</p>

In-Home Services	No more than 8 families assigned at a time. No more than 2 assignments during months 1-2 following completion of NET; no more than 4 case assignments during months 3-4 following NET; and no more than 6 cases during months 5-6 following NET.
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The agreed-upon total filled positions needed to reach the target caseloads for Investigations, Permanency, and Placement classifications is 430, which is a combination of filled positions (279) and vacancies (151). In order to achieve a funded vacancy factor of 9.45%, we will need to add 45 of the 50 positions Protective Services anticipates receiving from the legislature for FY24. This will increase the total number of positions to 475 with vacancies counted at 196 at the start of FY24. This calculation model was created utilizing a "point-in-time" analysis using December 2022 Human Resources data to create the model and calculations. The model can shift based on staff currently in a position or the position being vacant, but the 430 total staffing need is static based on 2022 annual maximum caseload sizes.

The 475 positions will be rebalanced throughout the state as necessary to result in the target caseload numbers per staff. The calculation tool has the ability to drill down to the county office level and will be an important tool for management utilization to fill gaps within each county office to continually right size the caseloads. The following is a graphical representation of the caseload calculation methodology.

Data set agreed upon by CYFD with 50 new positions from Leg session added					
<i>Data reflects 2023 Stds w/high caseload and supervisors not carrying a caseload and a 10% relief factor.</i>	Current Inv Staff All Counties	Current Perm Staff All Counties	Current Place Staff All Counties		
	116	105	42		
	Staff Needs 2023				
	75	26	27		
	Total Staff Need for 2023 Std (Current + Hiring need)				
	191	131	69		
Relief Factor of 10%	210	144	76		
Sum total all Staff Needed		430			Vacancy Factor
Sum Total Current Staff		279			9.45%
Sub Total Funded vacant Positions (as of Dec) w/additional 50 Funded vacant positions added		196			
Total FY24 Available Funded Positions		475			
Additional needed funded vacancies		(45)			
		In summary: 5 positions will need to be dedicated to these roles. We will have 45 extra vacant positions by including 50 newly funded positions.			

For more details on caseload calculation methodology please see the attached **Appendix 2**.

Adoption Placement Worker and Resource Family Placement Worker Role Definition

Protective Services will begin the process of separating the resource family support role of placement workers from the adoption support role. While we have not yet started, we anticipate this will start in August 2023 following the budget request. However, in September 2022, we began the larger reorganization of placement statewide. Each region will have a Placement Manager that will manage all placement staff within their region, rather than Placement being managed by each County Office Manager to provide more support and structure for Placement staff and Resource Parents.

In July 2022, Placement Supervisors around the state were consulted via survey to better understand what a reasonable Adoption Worker caseload might look like, and to gauge capacity utilizing existing FTE to begin this separation of duties. Additional positions may be sought pending what is determined to be an appropriate adoption support caseload and how the positions are geographically allocated. It is also possible that some regions will maintain the current model of "all-purpose" placement workers if that is more beneficial to the local office structure and needs. Any changes will be calculated to avoid delays in licensing of families or in achieving permanency for children.

Separating duties as described above will allow resource family support workers to focus on recruitment, licensing, and ongoing placement support to resource families while giving adoption workers a better chance to work with permanency planning staff in finding ideal homes for children awaiting adoption. It will expedite the legal adoption process and ensure stability in the adoptive home. CYFD will seek to obtain input from the field to ensure that the separation of roles appropriately benefits both resource families and children in need of adoptive homes. This will begin in Spring 2023. The preliminary analysis set forth below is based on conservative estimates of what an average monthly caseload might be for both types of workers.

County/Region/State	Placement FTE	Average # Resource Families	Average pending applications	Total Adoptions CY 2021	Adoptions (12- Month Avg.)	Children needing active recruitment	Adoption Workers needed for caseload of <15	Resource Family Support Workers needed for caseload of <20	Total "Placement" Workers needed
Region 1: Northwest	16	224	15	51	4.3	34	2.6	12.0	14.5
Region 2: Northeast	10	170	7	64	5.3	53	3.9	8.9	12.7
Region 3: Metro	23	320	16	126	10.5	138	9.9	16.8	26.7
Region 4: Southeast	15	175	10	52	4.3	89	6.2	9.3	15.5
Region 5: Southwest	13	194	11	51	4.3	88	6.2	10.3	16.4
New Mexico	77	1083	59	344	28.7	402	28.7	57.1	85.8

IMPACT OF VACANCIES AND TURNOVER

While average caseloads for most positions are attainable and meet the new aggregate empirical standards based on the allotted FTEs, actual caseloads for the relevant positions do not meet these standards in most counties due to high vacancies and turnover. Thus, the agency is taking a multi-pronged approach to build up a committed, well-trained, and stable workforce:

- Expand recruitment efforts at the state and county levels to engage in proactive, education- and community-based outreach rather than a passive review of applicants who seek out the agency;
- Implement evidence-informed screening processes to ensure that prospective employees are a good fit with the agency and possess the motivation, values, and qualifications needed for employment longevity;
- Streamline and standardize hiring practices to ensure that each county is hiring based on the same criteria and reducing the time it takes to fill vacant positions;
- Strengthen support to high-turnover positions to reduce caseloads, increase resilience and self-

care and minimize burnout;

- Ensure that onboarding and training is sufficient to provide the knowledge, skills, and sense of self-efficacy needed for workers to confidently perform their job duties;
- Promote a culture of accountability, qualified leadership, cultural humility, and empathy that is trauma-responsive to both clients and staff.

Specific strategies to achieve these outcomes are discussed throughout this Workforce Development Plan.

The following graph illustrates the trend of vacancy rates for Protective Services field positions (N=727 for SFY 2022). Increases in the vacancy rate may be the result of a variety of factors, including new positions added after legislative budget approvals; incoming cabinet administrations; and other factors such as pay increases for other sectors of government, which may incentive staff to transfer to another agency. The vacancy rate remained relatively low and stable during much of the pandemic and began to climb again as telework restrictions were lifted, and external agencies expanded their hiring. Vacancies can have a cumulative effect, as several vacancies within a county office increase the workload for remaining staff, thus increasing stress and leading to more vacancies.



FIELD SUPPORT

SUPERVISOR-TO-STAFF RATIOS

It is critical that manageable ratios of supervisor-to-staff are maintained for supervisors to provide effective caseload management; knowledge and skills assessment; practice guidance; and professional development of frontline workers. While no national empirical ratio has been established for child welfare, in particular, CYFD has typically strived for an average of 4 caseworkers per supervisor. This ratio is negatively impacted by vacancies and turnover. Additionally, certain job roles within some counties fail to meet this supervisor-to-staff ratio. For example, not all I-HS and IFIS staff have a role-specific supervisor and instead are supervised under the umbrella of investigations. The agency must assess this issue further and its impact on fidelity to the new In-Home Services practice model. In January of 2023, the agency's Quality Assurance team is conducting a fidelity review of the Family Connections model and will report on these supervisory issues as part of its findings.

The table below shows a regional breakdown of supervisor-to-worker ratios for each field position.

A county-level breakdown is included as **Appendix 3**.

Region/State	Workers per Supervisor (All Positions)	Investigations Workers per Supervisor	Permanency Planning Workers per Supervisor	Placement Workers per Supervisor	I- HS/IFIS Worker per Supervisor
Region 1: Northwest	4.6	4.0	4.6	4.0	No Supervisors
Region 2: Northeast	3.9	3.1	4.5	3.3	8.0
Region 3: Metro	4.5	4.0	5.6	4.6	3.3
Region 4: Southeast	4.0	3.6	4.2	3.8	7.0
Region 5: Southwest	4.5	4.0	4.6	4.3	10.0
New Mexico	4.3	3.8	4.8	4.1	7.0

Note that there are some rural counties that utilize “generic” supervisory roles—including some regional supervisory positions—which appear in the data as staff who are unsupervised. This is a function of hiring under specific job titles, but these supervisors are cross-trained and typically hired into these roles after gaining solid experience in the field. Frontline staff may also be “generic” in some cases. County leaders feel that this model works well for their offices:

"It seems to work best when we have three generic workers. This helps when there is a vacancy or when staff is on leave."

"The workers being generic is a positive especially when fully staffed. I think for small offices it gives an opportunity to grow for all of the workers and can prevent burn out."

COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINICIANS

Community Behavioral Health Clinicians (CBHCs) are organized under the agency’s Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Division and provide clinical consultation to both Juvenile Justice (JJ) and Protective Services (PS) Divisions. In SFY 2019, the CBHC program was transferred from JJ to BHS to expand coverage to PS. Since 2019 BHS has expanded the number of CBHCs from forty (40) FTE to fifty-six (56) FTE. Internal transfers supported the development of two new CBHC Bureau Chief positions in SFY 2022 that directly support liaising with community providers and MCOs, children’s behavioral health policies, and clinical consultation for high-need situations. The agency’s SFY 2024 budget request includes an additional twelve (12) CBHC FTEs.

	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	% Growth FY18 to FY24
CBHC Positions	40	40	54	54	54	66	65%

Additionally, CYFD leadership has made significant progress in reducing the vacancy rate CBHCs from 29% in February 2022 to 5.3% in December 2022. Efforts that directly impacted this success were the Healthcare Study beginning in December 2021 that resulted in increasing the salaries for CBHCs for appropriate placement; striving for appropriate placement when hiring new staff to retain quality employees particularly in hard to fill locations where workforce capacity for licensed clinicians is limited; and the focused efforts of the Behavioral Health Services Division to prioritize hiring.

The table below indicates the number of CYFD-involved youth with CBHC involvement. CBHC involvement with JJ teams is well established. CBHC involvement with PS youth teams has been increasing through consultation and participation in Individualized Planning Process meetings, staffing and communication with other partners.

Case Types	FY22 Q1	FY22 Q2	FY22 Q3	FY22 Q4	FY23 Q1	Total
CPS	132	132	156	163	187	770
JJD	1079	1156	1174	1205	1257	5871
Total	1211	1288	1330	1368	1444	6647

Case Types	FY22 Q1	FY22 Q2	FY22 Q3	FY22 Q4	FY23 Q1	Total
CPS Adoption		1		1		2
CPS Child Freed	75	70	79	80	96	400
CPS Family	55	59	75	81	89	359
CPS IL-18+ (Chafee)	1	1	1		1	4
CPS Licensed Foster Home	1	1	1	1	1	5
JJD Case	1075	1151	1169	1193	1247	5835
JJD Voluntary Services	4	5	5	12	10	36
Total	1211	1288	1330	1368	1444	6641

At this time in most regions, CBHC support is “shared” between JJ and PS. CBHCs are located throughout the state in county offices but can work with other clients in their region if vacancies or higher-than-average need arises in an adjacent county. Recently, in the Metro area (Bernalillo County), four CBHCs are assigned to work with Protective Services youth teams exclusively to streamline and focus the practice. This enables the CBHC to be more available for clinical consultation, IPP meetings and out-of-state placement staffings.

CBHCs do not carry a traditionally defined caseload as they do not provide direct services. CBHC efforts are focused on clinical consultation with youth teams while facilitating connections and referrals to external behavioral health and community-based resources. The ideal caseload for a CBHC with JJ only cases would be 30 youths, and PS only cases would be 20 youth. CBHC caseload is adjusted proportionally when they have a shared JJ and PS caseload.

For CISC, the CBHC uses the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool to work with PS youth teams to help determine the most appropriate clinical intervention as well as placement needs and supports. Following the CANS Decision Support Model recommendations, any CISC who meets certain thresholds would require that the PS worker (PPW or investigator) consult with a CBHC. Those thresholds include:

- CANS Developmental Needs – Level 2 and up;
- CANS Foster Care – Level 3; and
- CANS Functional Impairment – Level 2 and up.

The Behavioral Health Services Division’s Bureau of Program & Finance and Licensing & Certification Authority address internal and external behavioral health program development and children’s behavioral health policy.

LEGAL STAFF

Attorneys are assigned to either Counties or regions and can work across judicial districts. They are supervised by regional managing attorneys who may or may not carry specific cases depending on vacancies, and who may cover court hearings when the assigned attorney is unavailable. Caseloads for Children’s Court Attorneys also include Fostering Connections (extended foster care) cases. Regional caseloads are shown below (based on point-in-time caseloads in June 2022 *if each region was fully staffed*):

Region	CCA Positions	JQ Caseload	FC Caseload
Region 1: Northwest	4	28.17	4.17
Region 2: Northeast	4	36.5	5
Region 3: Metro I	6	31	5.33
Region 3: Metro II	6	20	5.67
Region 4: Southeast	5	56	8
Region 5: Southwest	4	41.8	2.8

These data were provided by the CYFD’s Chief Children’s Court Attorney and include foster care cases (“JQ”) and Fostering Connections cases (“FC”). Managing attorneys are not included as part of the case- carrying attorney counts. In 2023, CYFD will consider seeking at least one additional position in the Southeast region.

CLIENT SERVICE AGENTS

Client Service Agents (or CSAs) perform the critical role of providing hands-on, concrete supports to caseworkers. They assist with transportation, supervision of visitation, narrative data entry, obtaining needed items for children and families, and other tasks as needed. When these positions are vacant or insufficient for the needs of a county, it places a very tangible burden on case-carrying staff, particularly Permanency Planning Workers. Because the minimum qualifications for CSA positions are minimal, CYFD will place more emphasis on recruiting and retaining these key employees. Associates degree candidates from community colleges and soon-to-be high school graduates are eligible for these positions. This is a great stepping-stone to a career in child welfare work as well as a great asset to CYFD.

The average per-child caseload for a CSA *based on positions* statewide is 24. As shown below, these caseloads can vary greatly from one county to another. The work a given Permanency Planning Worker may have to perform to meet the child or family’s needs (such as transporting children and supervising visits) may be different between counties due to the difference in CSA caseloads. The caseloads are calculated using current FTEs and average children in custody on the last day of the month as a point in time (PIT).

County/Region/State	CSA	Monthly PIT avg. CISC	CSA child caseload avg.
Cibola	2	49	24.5
McKinley	2	25	12.5
San Juan	3	95	31.7
Sandoval	2	33	16.5
Torrance	2	24	12.0
Valencia	3	69	23.0
Region 1: Northwest	14	295	21.1
Colfax/Union	2	12	6.0
Rio Arriba/Los Alamos	2	54	27.0
San Miguel/Guadalupe/Mora	2	91	45.5
Santa Fe	2	59	29.5
Taos	1	49	49.0
Region 2: Northeast	9	265	29.4
Region 3: Metro	30	567	18.9
Chaves	2	102	51.0
Curry	2	62	31.0
Eddy	3	108	36.0
Lea	2	107	53.5
Quay/DeBaca/Harding	1	27	27.0
Roosevelt	1	13	13.0
Region 4: Southeast	11	419	38.1
Dona Ana	4	153	38.3
Grant/Catron	2	23	11.5
Lincoln	0.5	5	10.0
Luna/Hidalgo	1	16	16.0
Otero	1.5	65	43.3
Sierra	1	6	6.0
Socorro	1	4	4.0
Region 5: Southwest	11	272	24.7
New Mexico	75	1818	24.2

RECRUITMENT

INTRODUCTION

Social work can be an extraordinarily gratifying and rewarding job. However, child welfare jobs are notoriously difficult to recruit for. Qualified candidates may prefer private sector jobs with higher pay, lower stress, and more manageable caseloads. Potential candidates may not understand the breadth of roles available in child welfare or feel that a lack of experience misaligns them with the skills needed for these jobs.

More than ever, it is imperative that CYFD change its existing messaging or strategies related to recruitment in favor of methods that attract candidates from communities most disproportionately represented in the child welfare system and embrace targeted, "up-stream" approaches at even the high school level to generate interest and excitement about a field that has such a significant community role and impact.

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

TITLE IV-E STIPEND PROGRAM

CYFD has partnered with four state universities to offer a Title IV-E educational support stipend to social work degree candidates. Historically, this has been the anchor of most university-based recruitment efforts. It has limitations, however. In its current form, it is only an option for social work students and thus excludes adjacent degree types such as sociology, psychology, criminal justice, and public health.

Second, the student must repay the amount awarded if the post-degree employment commitment is unfulfilled. The employment commitment time, between 24-36 months, or repayment amount, \$4500 per semester as stipend recipients, is likely not significant enough to deter an employee from seeking employment outside CYFD. Instead, the low amount may present CYFD and the stipend program as an enticing option.

The stipend amount is set by the university tuition rate and, therefore, cannot be increased by CYFD to provide a greater financial incentive for students to stay with CYFD post-graduation. Furthermore, CYFD must also incentivize staff to stay for reasons other than financial benefits. Finally, the agency has historically played a small role in promoting the program and has had little oversight of curriculum related to child welfare knowledge and skills.

To decrease these limitations, CYFD has formed a workgroup with university partners to explore options for expanding the scope of these programs while ensuring that they are mutually worthwhile for CYFD, university programs, and students. This workgroup meets quarterly, and in between quarterly meetings, the CYFD Workforce Development Bureau team stays in contact and meets regularly with each university team to problem-solve issues specific to that university or associated students. As a result, the application process at each University has been improved to include greater communication with CYFD leaders who participate in the interview process allowing for a more robust and expedient process for students.

Other areas of concern have been addressed and will be addressed, such as increasing the number of qualified field supervisors offered by CYFD and addressing concerns over placement locations following graduation. The workgroup is developing a plan to increase available and qualified licensed social workers or supervision as well as professional development opportunities for the students regarding developing professional relationships and behaviors, leading them to be more desirable as applicants to leaders in the areas the student wishes to be placed. CYFD is committed to securing contractual supervision with external qualified licensed social workers to act as supervisors while we work on filling internal positions with the agency's field offices that are qualified to provide supervision. We are also

researching the possibility of creating two positions dedicated to providing supervision to all stipend students and overseeing other students completing internships with CYFD. By August 30, 2023, we will have adequate supervision for all stipend students and a developed series of professional development opportunities available to students.

LOAN REPAYMENT

While the state legislature did implement a loan repayment program in 2015, it does not appear to have had a significant impact as a recruitment tool, although it may have helped with retention in that it has, for some, made up for the lack of meaningful pay raises. In FY 2020, the average award amount (\$2,698) was only about 6% the of total average debt (\$44,856) for CYFD staff.

In the next year, CYFD will request an additional \$600,000 be appropriated to the New Mexico Higher Education Department's Student Financial Aid (fund 216) for this program, bringing the total available funds to \$1 million.

The New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Worker Loan Repayment Program provides education loan repayment assistance to Social Work professionals employed with the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department.

The purpose of the program is to increase the number of public service workers in the critical need positions at the Children, Youth and Families Department through an educational loan repayment program. The program provides for repayment of the principal and reasonable interest accrued on federal and private loans obtained for educational purposes.

FACE-TO-FACE RECRUITMENT

Engaging degree candidates directly to describe the challenging yet rewarding field of child welfare can be an effective recruitment tool. Over the next two academic years, CYFD will develop mechanisms to partner with higher education deans, instructors, advisors, and career services to identify opportunities for frontline staff, supervisors, and leaders within the agency to speak directly with potential job candidates. This could be effective not only in recruiting for core field positions but support roles, administrative roles, and attorneys. Starting in the fall semester of 2022, the CYFD Cabinet Secretary has conducted "listening tours" with higher education administrators at four state universities to identify ways in which CYFD can engage with prospective graduates in social work programs and adjacent programs through guest lecture opportunities, Q & A sessions, and other face-to-face engagement opportunities. The four universities visited are the University of New Mexico, New Mexico State University, Western New Mexico University and New Mexico Highlands University.

Over the next six months, CYFD will develop a Guest Lecturer team that will partner with university instructors to provide guest lectures on topics related to child welfare and CYFD. The lecturers will promote child welfare as a professional career path and CYFD as an employer. Lecturers have been and will continue to be appointed by their leadership. While completely voluntary, participation is incentivized through the awarding of administrative leave. Fifteen minutes of administrative leave will be granted to lecturers for every hour of lecturing they facilitate. The Workforce Development Bureau is working with all of New Mexico's universities and community colleges to identify and schedule appropriate lecture opportunities and match guest lecturers with the proper experience and knowledge. In addition, the Workforce Development Bureau will assist lecturers with developing materials and presentations as needed.

Meetings are scheduled or are being scheduled with each university's career services department's directors and leaders. The purpose of these meetings is to drive interest in CYFD as an employer and place students in Social Work schools and other related disciplines to complete internships coupled with professional development growth opportunities. These meetings also allow us to schedule or arrange participation in hiring and career fair events. By September 2023, we will have met with all of New Mexico's 4-year institutions of higher education that provide training relevant to child welfare. While the goal is to increase the number of licensed social workers, recruiting from related fields allows us to

create a well-rounded and staffed workforce.

Finally, those who seek employment with CYFD will be encouraged and supported to continue their education in social work by accessing our Educational Leave program and the Title IV-E Stipend program. The programs are promoted regularly and supported by CYFD leadership.

WORKFORCE COMPETENCIES

As part of more general recruitment, CYFD must engage in a campaign that pivots public perception away from child welfare work as having a limited role of removing children and facilitating adoptions to one that is ever evolving. CYFD must emphasize an image that embraces prevention and family strengths and embraces diversity and self-determination. Additionally, recruitment that emphasizes the personal characteristics, skills, and competencies of a potential workforce will allow CYFD to target a variety of educational disciplines and experiences, matching potential candidates with roles that perhaps they had not previously considered.

As CYFD redesigns its website and public-facing information portals over the next two years, a jobs portal will be created to augment the State Personnel Office (SPO) website and provide enhanced context for the jobs available, including in-depth job descriptions, ideal candidate descriptions, and “day in the life” realistic job previews. This project will be complete in October 2023. See the Hiring section of this document for more discussion of this approach.

COUNTY RECRUITMENT PLANS

While divisional leadership will continue to explore statewide efforts to recruit staff, county-level differences will always impact the ability to strategize on a larger scale. Counties will be asked to work with Protective Services data analysts, Regional Managers, and Field Deputy Directors to develop their own recruitment plans. Counties will be instructed to begin working on their annual plans in January 2023 and submit drafts by the end of September 2023 so that they can be reviewed by November 1, 2023, and included in the budget requests for the following fiscal year. The county recruitment plans will include, at minimum, the following information:

- Caseload data for the prior calendar year;
- Monthly vacancy rates for the prior calendar year;
- Turnover by position for the prior calendar year;
- Description of current hiring practices, including any identified resources needed;
- Planned activities for recruitment outreach; and
- All partnerships developed (or planned to develop) with local educational institutions. These plans will comprise CYFD’s overarching recruitment and retention plan, as described later in this document.

The following page includes a table, by county, of higher education institutions around the state. While not all institutions of higher learning include schools of social work or offer directly relevant degree programs, they still offer—even in underserved, rural areas of the state—opportunities to engage with motivated students who may be a good fit for the agency as support staff or future candidates for frontline staff.

Physical Location	County	4-year college main campus	4-year college branch campus	2-year college main campus	2-year college branch campus
Region 1: Northwest					
Grants	Cibola		New Mexico State University		
Gallup	McKinley		University of New Mexico		Dine College, Navajo Technical University (Crownpoint)
Farmington	San Juan		New Mexico Highlands University	San Juan College	Dine College (Shiprock)
Rio Rancho	Sandoval		New Mexico Highlands University		
Estancia	Torrance				
Los Lunas	Valencia		University of New Mexico (Valencia)		
Region 2: Northeast					
Raton	Colfax				
Espanola	Rio Arriba	Northern New Mexico College	University of New Mexico (Los Alamos)		
Las Vegas	San Miguel	New Mexico Highlands University		Luna Community College	
Santa Fe	Santa Fe		Higher Education Center (NMHU, NNMC, UNM)	Santa Fe Community College	
Taos	Taos		University of New Mexico		
Region 3: Metro					
Albuquerque	Bernalillo	University of New Mexico	New Mexico Highlands University	Central New Mexico Community College	
Region 4: Southeast					
Roswell	Chaves		Eastern New Mexico University		
Clovis	Curry			Clovis Community College	
Carlsbad	Eddy		New Mexico State University		
Hobbs	Lea			New Mexico Junior College	
Tuamcari	Quay			Mesalands Community College	
Portales	Roosevelt	Eastern New Mexico University			
Region 5: Southwest					
Las Cruces	Dona Ana	New Mexico State University		Dona Ana Community College	
Silver City	Grant	Western New Mexico University			
Ruidoso	Lincoln		Eastern New Mexico University		
Deming	Luna				
Alamogordo	Otero		New Mexico State University		
Torrey	Sierra				
Socorro	Socorro				

BUILDING A CULTURALLY REFLECTIVE WORKFORCE

The beauty and strength of New Mexico is in its cultural and ethnic diversity. This diversity compels CYFD to incorporate into its statewide recruitment plan a demographically representative workforce that reflects the families it serves. This approach will be taken at all levels of recruitment.

A current comparison of workforce race and ethnicity demographics with the demographics of families served by the agency illustrates some disparities in the statewide data. Limitations of the data originating in data collection prevent perfect comparisons. For example, there is an "Unknown" category for staff and an "Other" category for children served, and these categories are comprised of different values. For employees, the "Unknown" category signifies missing data.

The results of this analysis are presented below.

Job Category	Am.						Total
	Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Unknown	
CENTRAL OFFICE ADMIN	3.3%	0.8%	2.9%	63.0%	25.9%	4.1%	100%
CENTRAL OFFICE LEADERSHIP	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	27.8%	0.0%	100%
FIELD MANAGER	5.6%	0.0%	2.8%	66.7%	19.4%	5.6%	100%
FIELD STAFF	9.2%	12%	2.8%	57.2%	25.2%	4.4%	100%
FIELD SUPPORT	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	61.5%	38.5%	0.0%	100%
LEGAL	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	19.2%	57.7%	15.4%	100%
ALL POSITIONS	6.8%	10%	2.9%	58.4%	26.4%	4.5%	100%
	Other						
Children Served in Foster Care CY 2021	7.6%	0.1%	4.3%	61.3%	21.9%	4.9%	100%
Children Subject to Investigation CY 2021	7.6%	0.2%	2.8%	53.3%	19.9%	16.2%	100%

*"Other" for counts of children includes multi-race, unknown, and NHPI

CYFD has created a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion position for the Office of the Secretary in the FY24 budget request that will oversee implementing the following strategies as well as creating additional ones. Specific strategies currently planned to increase workforce diversity include:

- Ensuring that recruitment materials such as brochures, website recruitment tools, and Realistic Job Previews showcase an eclectic representation of staff diversity;
- Ensuring that hiring protocols and standardized interview questions do not contain any items that might bias hiring decisions against certain groups;
- Promoting county recruitment activities and hiring processes that consider diversity in their outreach, interviewing, and candidate selection; and
- Incorporating core concepts of cultural humility and self-reflection in training and supervision throughout the organization to retain diverse staff and develop leadership and advancement opportunities for all employees.

HIRING

INTRODUCTION

The hiring process for child welfare positions should include a comprehensive self-screening process for potential applicants to accomplish two goals: to eliminate unqualified or poorly matched recruits from the hiring pool; and to make more broadly known the variety of jobs in the field that are available to be matched to recruits' skillsets, experience, professional interests, and personal preferences. Too often, child welfare as a profession is represented by the media (e.g., news coverage, movies, and television) in a very limited scope. Pre-hiring job information and assessments are intended to expand the public's knowledge of the roles available in this challenging but rewarding field.

As of October 31, 2022, a Hiring Protocol Work Group has been identified and convened. The work group includes managers, supervisors, and field staff of varying tenures with the agency to ensure fairness and relevance to New Mexico's diversity, unique cultures, and practice.

PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Currently, potential applicants' understanding of child welfare field positions is limited to job descriptions as listed in the State Personnel Office-administered job portal. Because this system is maintained by SPO, CYFD is limited in the amount of information that is provided to potential applicants about the purpose and nature of each position.

The Department acknowledges the importance of providing a more detailed, nuanced understanding of the positions an applicant views on the State Personnel Office (SPO) Website. CYFD will create its own job portal for Protective Services field positions on cyfd.org that includes descriptions of each job in the context of the agency's mission and values; a description of a "typical day on the job"; frequently asked questions ("FAQ"); qualities of the ideal applicant; and links to each position's Realistic Job Preview (described below). If the applicant is interested in applying, they will be directed to a link to the SPO website and be able to search for specific job postings referenced on the cyfd.org site by job identification number. They will also be provided with contact information for CYFD Human Resources and PSD HR Liaisons if they have questions or need assistance in applying for positions. The content for this webpage will be modeled after the Georgia Employee Selection Protocol guidelines and customized for New Mexico's needs by the Hiring Protocol Work Group established in October of 2022.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Similar to pre-application processes adopted by other states, CYFD will include a self-assessment questionnaire as a precursor to the Realistic Job Preview series described below no later than August 2023. Self-assessments allow the applicant to compare the values and competencies required for the job against their own and can also include items pertaining to work conditions such as travel, working outside of standard business hours, being part of an on-call rotation, and telework opportunities. A moderate-to-high score would indicate a good fit with the agency and role; a lower score would suggest that the applicant would likely be a poor fit.

Several existing models are available for the CYFD to consider. The Hiring Protocol Work Group will use these resources as a basis for finalizing New Mexico's self-assessment content.

It's important to note that, due to hiring regulations at the state level, pre-application screening processes cannot be factored into the hiring process on the agency side. These activities, rather, are intended to help interested candidates self-select into (or out of) the applicant pool prior to consideration by CYFD, thus removing some of the uncertainty on the part of the hiring team as to whether a candidate is a good fit for the position. The new self-assessment will be in place by September 2023.

REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW PROJECT

At least 16 other states have implemented Realistic Job Preview (RJP) video series as part of their recruitment and hiring efforts. As described by the Children's Bureau's Child Welfare Information Gateway, "RJPs are designed to present a balanced view of both the rewards and demands of child welfare positions in order to align the goals and expectations of applicants with the requirements of child welfare work." The content and formats of RJP videos vary across states, but most incorporate interviews with experienced staff; supervisors; former foster youth; parents who have been helped by the system; and external stakeholders such as family court judges. The best examples include an acknowledgement of the cultural diversity inherent in the work as well as the need to assess personal biases and allow growth on the job. They also demystify some of the misconceptions about the child welfare system.

By January 31, 2023, CYFD will convene an employee-led task force to develop the participants and content for one general video as well as shorter videos that are role-specific for investigations, permanency planning, placement, and in-home services; other roles, such as client service agents, may also be included depending on the resources available. This task force will be separate from the Hiring Protocol Work Group (although may share common members) since it will involve working directly with the contractor hired to develop the video series. By March 1, 2023, a contractor will be identified. Work related to creating the videos will begin by May 31, 2023, with a projected completion date of October 31, 2023.

Priorities for the RJPs in New Mexico will include:

- Showcasing staff diversity (age, gender, race, ethnicity);
- Ensuring that challenges specific to New Mexico communities are the focus;
- Discussing the importance of tribal collaboration and adherence to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and New Mexico Indian Family Protection Act (IFPA); and
- Illustrating both rural and urban communities as potential settings for child welfare work.

CYFD is currently engaged in a comprehensive redesign of its website and accompanying social media. Part of the public site's redesign will be an employment portal, where these RJP videos will be prominently linked alongside all current open positions by location.

The redesigned website is now live. The goal for this project's complete development and implementation is October 31, 2023.

STANDARDIZATION OF INTERVIEW AND SELECTION CRITERIA

FIRST INTERVIEW

Currently, there is no standardized set of interview questions used consistently throughout the state for each job role. One county may interview for a given position using interview questions highly specific to that role, while another may prefer to utilize broader questions to gauge candidate suitability for child welfare work more generally. After an applicant views the Realistic Job Preview and completes the self-assessment, and decides to continue the hiring process, the first job interview will enable the agency to better understand the applicant's motivations, understanding of the work, and overall fit with the role for which they are applying. The information gathered throughout the interview process should align with the agency's mission and the core competencies associated with the role.

Staying Power! is an evidence-based recruitment and training protocol developed by the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work's Jordan Institute for Families. This will serve as a basis for the hiring protocol work group to develop a set of interview questions for each frontline position to be used uniformly throughout the state. The interview protocol includes case study review and discussion as well as a "fact-finding" exercise to allow the candidate to demonstrate critical thinking skills and emotional intelligence as applied to child welfare practice.

The standardized interview content will be finalized and implemented by July 30, 2023.

SECOND INTERVIEW

Those candidates who are selected to advance in the hiring process may be offered a second interview with county office staff. This will serve as a "reverse interview" with 1-2 field staff who have experience and knowledge about the job for which the candidate is applying. The candidate will have the opportunity to ask questions in a confidential environment to learn more about the position and the day-to-day aspects of the job.

This step in the process may be eliminated when candidates are recruited through rapid-hire events which enable candidates to be interviewed on the day of the event, and made contingent job offers either that day or within one or two days after the event. These events have had varying levels of success over the years depending on attendance, location, quality of applicants and other factors. These events are coordinated by the central human resources office, not the field offices, and the decision to implement one is based on current circumstances in the location.

TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

New staff come to the agency with a wide array of prior knowledge and experience. Preparing them for their role in Protective Services requires training staff to be adaptive and flexible to the agency's needs and feedback from both new and seasoned staff. Therefore, any training plan should essentially be an interactive and evolving document. Based on formal and informal feedback provided by field staff, supervisors, and managers over the last several years, Protective Services will emphasize role-specific skill-building and appropriate overall orientation to the agency in its training plan.

The new program applies a scaffolding approach to learning. The design engages CYFD new hires in content relevant to all CYFD employees and proceeds to branch out into role-specific training for Protective Services' field workers. In addition, the Graduated Caseload plan is woven into the design to begin giving workers manageable experiences, training and coaching before carrying a full caseload and is aligned with the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) standards.

NEW EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING AND NEW EMPLOYEE TRAINING (NEO NET)

Retaining employees begins with a structured onboarding process. CYFD is consistently working to improve its onboarding process.

New employees undergo rigorous 5-week training to develop their knowledge and skills, including two weeks of on-the-job training. This format was implemented in December 2020. We have redesigned New Employee Training (NET) to be more experiential and align with current adult learning best practices. We have also developed a New Employee Onboarding (NEO) track. Combined, they are a 6-week comprehensive start for the new employee.

Week 1 and each following Monday are dedicated to agency-wide content required by the Kevin S. Settlement and other needed content to help all CYFD employees succeed in their roles and align their practice with CYFD's Vision and Mission. Week one is dedicated entirely to the aforementioned. To start every newly hired employee off from the start with the needed learning, Week One will be offered at the beginning of every pay period, aligning with the hiring cycles.

The former format offered employees the opportunity to learn much of what they needed in the field; however, summative evaluations had consistently shown that learners were gaining much knowledge but felt overwhelmed and apprehensive about applying skills in the field. As a result, the new format engages learners in a cycle of learning and application with greater job-specific focus has been designed and scheduled to be implemented beginning in January of 2023. Access to review content and curriculum design will be available in February 2023. The first NEO Week One class will begin on January 9, 2023. The first NET will commence in February 2023. NET will be offered 12 times annually.

NEO NET applies an adult learning-centric scaffolding approach to the curriculum design. The design engages CYFD new hires in content relevant to all CYFD employees and proceeds to branch out into role-specific training for Protective Services' field workers. In addition, the Graduated Caseload plan is woven into the design to begin giving workers manageable experiences, training, and coaching before carrying a full caseload. Details about the Graduated Caseload plan are provided in the next section.

The NEO curriculum is for all new CYFD employees, including Protective Services, Behavioral Health, Juvenile Justice, and administration. Content covers curriculum relevant to all CYFD employees, including being trauma-responsive, ICWA, Cultural Humility, and other content.

On day one, NEO Protective Services employees will receive an On-the-Job Training (OJT) manual. The OJT manual will act as their guide and materials for the next six weeks of training (NEO and NET). It includes a table of contents, is divided into modules, and will be housed electronically in CYFD's LMS system, Cornerstone, allowing access to content during and beyond the worker's orientation and training period.

Over five weeks of NET, new Protective Services hires will participate in general (required of all CYFD

employees) and targeted (Specific to Protective Services and role-specific) training that corresponds with the guided-experience times in the worker's home office and field. As a result, the amount of time in the structured training environment will decrease each week while the amount of time in the field will increase.

The OJT manual is designed to engage the employee in self-assessment, self-paced learning, and connecting with the senior staff, supervisors, and Regional Coaches. Revisions to the current OJT will include content materials and activities for all NEO and NET training, including role-specific training, knowledge and skills assessments, Additional resources, and onboarding plans and activities.

Supervisors will receive an accompanying manual, the Supervisor's Onboarding Guide. This guide will assist supervisors in creating an environment where the new worker can thrive, learn, and safely apply new skills as they build their capacity to carry a full caseload. All materials will be available for review by the end of February 2023.

Supervisors, County Office Managers, and Regional Office Managers will attend a 2-hour training preparing them for the new onboarding process. The training design will guide leaders to roll out the Graduated Caseloads Plan effectively, explain how to use the accompanying manual, assist their new worker's growth and development, and set the stage for success and retention. Leaders will work with coaches to ensure effective implementation and workers' success. Training will begin in January 2023.

NET content is determined by Protective Services Division leadership based on the needs of our community and child welfare best practices. To improve the effectiveness of content delivery, the Workforce Development Bureau's Academy of Professional Development, Resource Parent Training, and Regional Coaching teams completed in October 2022 an extensive Instructional Design training program to develop curriculum design skills to apply to the content. Modules are being reviewed and updated to reflect adult learning principles and activities that reinforce learning and check for understanding.

As discussed earlier, the content includes the organization-wide training requirement, such as ICWA, Trauma- Responsiveness, Motivational Interviewing, Cultural Humility, and other child welfare best practices. It also includes Human Resources related training, such as understanding policies directly related to being a CYFD employee, benefits orientation, and other related content that supports retaining employees through a solid introduction and knowledge of working for the organization and its fundamental principles and practices.

Each module is designed to be delivered virtually or in person. Adult learning principles and highly engaging activities have been added to the content to assure engagement, including frequent knowledge and skills checks. The Workforce Development Bureau has developed guidelines for participating in virtual learning events that will be reviewed with each cohort of learners and reinforced throughout their training, including directions such as keeping cameras on during instruction, participating fully, not multi-tasking, etc. Instructors will give the appropriate number of breaks (a minimum of 15 minutes per hour of screen/classroom time), gauge learners' energy, and engage and apply energizer activities as needed. The decision to continue practicing live-virtual learning events stems from having staff located throughout the state. Because NET is not designed as 40 hours a week of straight classroom time, learners must be in their own field offices to practice learning and review content with their supervisors and mentors. This structure and delivery method will be continually evaluated and modified as needed to meet the needs of our staff best and provide comprehensive and effective learning and application of learning.

Week one of NET includes 30 hours of classroom and online learning time and 10 hours of guided time in the worker's home office working with their supervisor, senior staff, and completing self-guided activities. The OJT Manual and Supervisor's Onboarding Guide outline activities to complete during these times. Each week the amount of home office and field time increases, and classroom time decreases. By the final week, learners will be in the classroom for ten hours and in the office and field for 30 hours.

For new employees who are transferring from a different position or office, the NEO NET is facilitated so such employees can join offerings specific to their new role and needs. They will not need to retake the entire NEO/NET, and the required modules will be determined jointly by the employee, supervisors,

and Role-Specific Coach.

Many pieces of training, such as Trauma Responsiveness and ICWA, are required by all existing staff. Existing staff will have till December 31, 2023, to enroll and complete the pieces of training. They will enroll and participate along with the new staff. Compliance will be tracked via Cornerstone, and compliance reports will be provided to leaders every other month.

COACHING

Workforce Development Bureau Regional Coaches connect with new employees in their first week of training and support the new hires during their on-the-job training. Currently, new employees must participate in two coaching sessions to complete their Individualized Development Assessment (IDA). As the NEO NET program begins, coaches will connect with new hires each week to provide additional support and ensure that the learners build the needed knowledge and skills to achieve proficiency before carrying cases or working independently.

New employees, supervisors, and coaches will develop an Individualized Development Plan for the new employee during an on-the-job training session. This tool tracks growth and determines needed areas of support and focus. Starting in January 2023, employees will have monthly individual coaching sessions to build their knowledge and skills until they are proficient enough to carry a full caseload independently. New workers will be encouraged to work more frequently with coaches and may elect to continue the relationship beyond their onboarding phase. New employees will also participate in a Peer Learning Network (PLN) group for the first six months of employment.

Additional group and individual coaching opportunities are available through the Peer Learning Networks, Collaborate Assessment Planning staffings, and fidelity group coaching. Employees can self-refer for coaching beyond their mandated initial coaching, and supervisors can also require additional coaching. Beginning in April 2022, all employees and leaders can request coaching services using CYFD's learning management system, Cornerstone.

In addition to new hire coaching, Coaches are assigned to specific roles/disciplines, namely Investigations, Placement and Permanency. The intention is that each role has two coaches assigned as a state-wide mentor. Current staffing has yielded two coaches assigned to Investigation and one each to Placement and Permanency. However, the Regional Coaching Unit will be fully staffed by February 2023. Coaches have spent the past several months building expertise in their assigned roles and cultivating relationships with units and leaders within those roles. This included field observations with supervisors and senior workers, mastering and understanding related policies and procedures, and fully participating in quality review meetings. In addition, they actively participate in appropriate staffing and meetings. This is described in greater detail further on in this document.

New employee coaching is well utilized. 29% of Protective Services field staff had one coaching session only upon graduation from NET between December 2021 – December 2022. 32% of Protective Services field staff had 2+ coaching sessions upon graduation from NET between December 2021 – 2022, and 61% of Protective Services field staff had one or more coaching sessions upon graduation from NET between December 2021 - 2022. We will continue to track usage and expect the use to increase. We are currently working on an evaluation of services planned to be administered by July 2023. We will begin monitoring role-specific coaching usage in January 2023.

ROLE-SPECIFIC MENTORING AND COACHING

Current pre-service training for new employees includes role-specific instruction and coaching; however, over the last few years, it has become clear that workers need more focused training and coaching that is specific to the knowledge, skills, competencies, policies, and procedures related to their specific job within the agency. The Workforce Development Bureau's Regional Coaching Unit has added to its existing coaching model role-specific coaching and mentoring. Each coach has developed expertise in one Protective Services field role (Investigation, Permanency or Placement). Building expertise included re-training of the use of the structured decision-making (SDM) and Safety Organized Practice (SOP) tools and attending a train-the-trainer training facilitated by CYFD contractors Evident

Change to improve the ability to assist in coaching and mentoring field staff. The skills and knowledge building around SDM and SOP by all the coaches allows each coach to tie safety measures and tools into their role-specific coaching, regardless of the role.

Building role-specific expertise has occurred through re-training and partnering with senior-level field staff and supervisors to observe skills in the field. By January of 2023, the coaches will be able to mentor staff and leaders. There will be two coaches per Protective Services role when fully staffed, and they will work with staff state-wide. We expect to be fully staffed with six full-time coaches by the end of January 2023. Being role-specific includes being a subject matter expert regarding policy and procedures. This includes participating in relevant meetings and staffings, one-on-one and team mentoring with field staff, and consulting with supervisors, County Office Managers, and other leaders.

Concurrently, the coaching and training team is participating in updating the New Employee Training program. As previously discussed, the new format will be role-specific and heavily focused on on-the-job training. The team is creating in-depth, role-specific On-the-Job manuals for new hires to use in the field. These manuals will include relevant policies and procedures that coincide with job competencies and be in use by January 2023's first group of newly hired employees.

An In-Home Services coordinator position that can serve as a subject matter expert in the Family Connections model and ensure fidelity to the model has been requested as part of the agency's 2024 budget. This request and its status is pending.

ICWA/IFPA TRAINING COORDINATOR AND TRAINER/COACH POSITIONS

CYFD is in the process of recruiting for a new position within the agency to support the creation, implementation, and ongoing support of the Indian Child Welfare Act and Indian Family Protection Act training needs.

This position, an Indian Child Welfare Training Coordinator, will provide support to the Office of Tribal Affairs Director on training matters as it relates to ICWA and IFPA. The Office of Tribal Affairs works closely with the Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes to ensure compliance with the federal requirements of the ICWA, the state requirements of the IFPA, and other laws governing child welfare. Additionally, the ICWA/IFPA Training Coordinator will support the agency's efforts in meeting the deliverables in the Kevin S. Settlement Agreement, the New Mexico Children's Code, and the New Mexico State-Tribal Collaboration Act. The Office of Tribal Affairs also provides supportive services and technical assistance to the CYFD workforce within the Behavioral Health Services Division, Juvenile Justice Services Division, and Protective Services Division. The Indian Child Welfare Training Coordinator will work with the agency's workforce to build up their professional knowledge and practice through training, coaching, and development of materials in collaboration with the Nations, Pueblos, Tribes and the Workforce Development Bureau. The Indian Child Welfare Training Coordinator will train and coach at the individual, group, and community levels to provide knowledge and skills of best practice approaches when working with Native Children, families and Tribal partners with a focus on compliance with ICWA and IFPA standards; and to ensure the workforce is able to facilitate culturally responsive support.

CYFD is in the process of hiring an ICWA/IFPA Trainer/Coach in the Office of Tribal Affairs. The Trainer/Coach will provide small group and one-on-one coaching that includes activities to increase the knowledge, skills, and abilities of our workers related to ICWA and IFPA implementation. Activities may consist of group coaching, manual/guide creation, unit meetings or training, and community liaison meetings. Additionally, the position may provide case-specific guidance and problem-solving. The incumbent will ensure that staff know best practices with Native Children and families, that practice is compliant with ICWA and IFPA; and that the workforce can facilitate culturally responsive interventions and support. All employees will be able to self-refer or be referred or mandated by their supervisors for coaching on specific areas of need.

Duties associated with this position will include:

- Conducting regular coaching sessions with CYFD workforce and supervisors to develop skills to meet the ICWA/IFPA requirements;
- Conducting training for CYFD workforce specific to developing best practice approaches to

serving Native Children, youth and families;

- Contributing to work groups intended to improve practice with Native Children, youth, families, Tribal partners and external stakeholders;
- Working with CYFD division leaders, Nations, Pueblos, Tribes, and Workforce Development Bureau to build data-informed initiatives to identify the needs and solutions for meeting CYFD workforce training needs;
- Facilitating meetings with Tribal partners, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders to build a network of support which furthers training and development to improve services to Native Children, youth, and families;
- Keeping the Director of Tribal Affairs informed of communication and/or requests from Tribal partners and other stakeholders on a regular basis; and
- Other duties as assigned.

The ICWA Training Plan is included here as Appendix 4.

CORE COMPETENCY MODEL

Engaging in ongoing training is essential to develop expertise and skills. Many employees have balanced the requirements of training with their workload, as their training has often been done in a piecemeal fashion rather than rolled out in a manner that targets the implementation of practice changes. Current training practices can be time-consuming and may also have repetitive content that overlaps or conflict with each other when they are delivered by different entities. Training is not identified for specific positions and often does not have skills-building elements.

To address these challenges, CYFD is building a core competency model for each field worker position. It is designing training to meet the role-specific requirements of each position and creating an implementation process to increase training effectiveness, improve the timing of trainings, and eliminate issues of overlap and repetition. Competency models are in production and will be complete for all relevant roles by July 2023. Training plans for each position will be developed by December 2023. Plans will be based on competencies and include training requirements and activities available to build the competencies. Plans will be reviewed and updated yearly to reflect changing learning needs of each role. Completion of learning plans will be a requirement of employees and will be tracked using Cornerstone.

EVALUATION OF TRAINING

While it is quite common for learner success to be tracked by Summative Assessments that consist of a multiple-choice quiz at the end of each training session, the WDB has a different standard for

Summative Assessment. We believe that the goal of a Summative assessment is more than just proving that the learner was involved enough to remember basic information, but instead should evaluate the student's learning, how they will apply it to their work, and whether there has been a shift in the learner's understanding of their own biases. The WDB has a standard framework for Summative Assessments that provides a type of assessment based on the learning level of the module's objectives. For modules at the "Knowledge" level, learners will complete a multiple-choice quiz; for modules at the "Application" level, learners will complete a skill-based exercise with feedback provided by trainers, coaches, and supervisors; and for modules at the "Evaluation" level, learners will complete a self-reflective exercise with coaches, resulting in developing an Individual Development Plan to use the results of the assessment to connect to ways they can improve their child welfare practice. The WDB's Summative Assessment plan is included herein as **Appendix 5**.

TRAINING EVALUATOR

The Division of Performance and Accountability will develop a Training Evaluator position that will be housed independently from the Workforce Development Bureau, reporting directly to the Director of Performance and Accountability. A vacant position and funding have been identified to reclassify to create this position. It is estimated that this new position will be filled in June 2023. This person will be responsible for conducting analyses that evaluate training effectiveness in achieving desired learning outcomes as well as conducting focus groups with trainees to assess training delivery methods. Additionally, the Training Evaluator will work with the agency's Quality Assurance personnel to identify gaps in practice as likely indicators of training needs. The position will lead efforts to promote continuous quality improvement of all training efforts developed and implemented within the agency.

GRADUATED CASELOADS

INTRODUCTION

Post newly hired field workers' New Employee Training: they will be given a graduated caseload to allow them the opportunity to master skills and competencies required to successfully maintain an independent caseload. These guidelines are flexible and will need to be adapted to the knowledge, skills, and abilities of staff. Some workers, such as former interns or stipend students, may be able to move more quickly through the competencies, while other staff may need to proceed at a slower rate. For each role, we have indicated knowledge, skills, and abilities that should be mastered before moving to the next level.

A worker will be considered ready for an independent caseload when they are able to move through a case from start to finish with minimal direction from their supervisor. Independent workers know the steps and processes needed to complete a case, and they know where to find relevant information (e.g., Intranet, policy, and procedures). Independent workers can effectively utilize all tools related to their job (e.g., FACTS, SDM, Binti, CANS, and SAFE Home Study). While the worker is independent, the supervisor continues to provide education, administration guidance, and support.

Workload should be considered when determining the number of cases. Supervisors can adapt assignments based on the complexity of individual cases. CYFD recognizes that implementation of this practice may be complicated in instances where counties are experiencing unusually high vacancies or multiple staff on extended leave. In these situations, divisional and regional leadership will work directly with county managers and supervisors to create individualized plans to keep caseloads reasonable for newer staff. This may include working with adjacent counties or units.

Four positions for the Quick Reaction Team are currently posted. They will be located throughout the State and travel as needed to assist in maintaining caseload standards and assisting with overflow for counties experiencing high vacancies, unusually high numbers of reports, or a large number of staff who must take emergency or extended leave.

Below, the graduated caseload competencies for Protective Services positions are described. Over 2023, CYFD will be implementing similar guidelines for Juvenile Justice and Behavioral Health field positions.

ROLE-SPECIFIC GRADUATED CASELOAD COMPETENCIES

INVESTIGATIONS

Level 1: Shadowing and Level 1 Case Assignment (1-2 months following completion NET)

- Worker has completed New Employee Training (NET);
- Worker can briefly explain the steps of a case from a checklist (e.g., initiation, collaterals, disposition);
- Worker demonstrates accurate documentation when shadowing a mentor;
- Worker asks appropriate follow-up questions during debrief with mentor; and
- Worker has a basic understanding of core competencies and can identify at least one strength and one opportunity for growth.

Caseload: No primary assignments for first 2 months after completion of NET.

Level 2: Being Shadowed (3-4 months following NET)

- Worker demonstrates effective motivational interviewing techniques;

- Worker can move through the case with minimal direction from mentor;
- Worker can determine follow-up steps from questions asked in supervision;
- Worker can document case in FACTS with limited direction; and
- Worker has increased understanding of core competencies and has identified growth in at least one area.

***Caseload:** Worker can be added as primary assignment on 3 new cases in months 3-4 following NET; the worker can be secondary assignment for documentation support and shadowing.*

Level 3: Working Independently (5-6 months after NET)

- Worker demonstrates fidelity to policy and procedures;
- Worker can explain to supervisor anticipated steps prior to case initiation;
- Worker can articulate when to contact supervisor for next steps (e.g., removal of child, Initial Relative Assessment, etc.);
- Worker can complete documentation in FACTS with minimal guidance;
- Worker can anticipate and plan for changing needs of the client/family during the life of the case;
- Worker can take appropriate steps to meet the needs of the client/family;
- Worker makes appropriate referrals; and
- Worker continues to identify areas of growth in core competencies.

***Caseload:** Worker is primary on most of their cases; worker can be assigned to 6 new cases in months 5-6 following NET, and following completion of month six after NET, the worker can be primary on no more than 12 cases (families) total.*

Level 4: Mentor (A year or more after NET)

- Mentor can maintain own caseload while providing some support to newer staff;
- Mentor provides accurate documentation;
- Mentor is willing and able to slow down to demonstrate steps in the case;
- Mentor can answer questions about processes in the case; and
- Mentor has demonstrated significant growth in multiple core competencies.

***Caseload:** Mentor is primary on own cases, as well as the cases Level 1-2 workers are secondary on. The caseload is no more than 12 cases (families) total.*

PERMANENCY PLANNING

Level 1: Shadowing and Level 1 Assignment (1-2 months after NET)

- Worker has completed New Employee Training (NET);
- Worker can briefly explain the steps of a case from a checklist (e.g., treatment planning, court hearings);
- Worker demonstrates accurate documentation when shadowing a mentor;

- Worker asks appropriate follow-up questions during debrief with a mentor; and
- Worker has a basic understanding of core competencies and can identify at least one strength and one opportunity for growth.

***Caseload:** Worker can be added as primary on 5 cases (children) that will be transferred to them.*

Level 2: Being Shadowed and Level 2 Assignment (3-4 months after NET)

- Worker demonstrates effective engagement with families;
- Worker can move through the cases with minimal direction from a mentor;
- Worker can determine follow-up steps from questions asked in supervision;
- Worker can document case in FACTS with limited direction; and
- Worker has increased understanding of core competencies and has identified growth in at least one area.

***Caseload:** Worker can be added as primary on 8 cases (children).*

Level 3: Working Independently (5-6 months after NET)

- Worker demonstrates fidelity to policy and procedures;
- Worker can explain to supervisor anticipated steps prior to case transfer;
- Worker can articulate when to contact supervisor for next steps;
- Worker can complete documentation in FACTS with minimal guidance;
- Worker can anticipate and plan for changing needs of the client/family during the life of the case;
- Worker can take appropriate steps to meet the needs of the client/family;
- Worker makes appropriate referrals; and
- Worker continues to identify areas of growth in core competencies.

***Caseload:** Worker is primary on most cases. Worker can be a primary on 10-12 cases. Following completion of month six, the worker can be primary on no more than 15 cases (children) at a time.*

Level 4: Mentor (A year or more after NET)

- Mentor can maintain own caseload while providing some support to newer staff;
- Mentor provides accurate documentation;
- Mentor is willing and able to slow down to demonstrate steps in the case;
- Mentor can answer questions about processes in the case; and
- Mentor has demonstrated significant growth in multiple core competencies.

***Caseload:** Mentor is primary on own cases and can provide support and be assigned as secondary on Level 1-2 workers. No more than 15 children on a caseload.*

PLACEMENT

Level 1: Shadowing and Level 1 Assignment (1-2 months after NET)

- Worker has completed New Employee Training (NET);
- Worker can briefly explain the steps of a case from a checklist (e.g., background checks, home study);
- Worker demonstrates accurate documentation when shadowing a mentor;
- Worker asks appropriate follow-up questions during debrief with mentor; and
- Worker has a basic understanding of core competencies and can identify at least one strength and one opportunity for growth.

***Caseload:** Worker can be added as primary on 3-5 licensed family cases or adoption cases in months 1-2 following NET. Once SAFE Home Study training has been completed, worker can be assigned one home study. SAFE training is offered only periodically, so this should not prevent staff from moving to the next level.*

Level 2: Being Shadowed and Level 2 Assignment (3-4 months after NET)

- Worker demonstrates effective engagement with families;
- Worker can move through the cases with minimal direction from mentor;
- Worker can determine follow-up steps from questions asked in supervision;
- Worker can document case in FACTS with limited direction; and
- Worker has increased understanding of core competencies and has identified growth in at least one area.

***Caseload:** Worker can be assigned as primary on 5-8 licensed family cases or adoption cases. Worker can be assigned 2 new home studies.*

Level 3: Working Independently (5-6 months after NET)

- Worker demonstrates fidelity to policy and procedures;
- Worker can explain to supervisor anticipated steps in the licensing process and adoption;
- Worker can articulate when to contact supervisor for next steps;
- Worker can complete documentation in FACTS with minimal guidance;
- Worker can anticipate and plan for changing needs of the client/family before and after placements are made;
- Worker can take appropriate steps to meet the needs of the client/family;
- Worker makes appropriate referrals; and
- Worker continues to identify areas of growth in core competencies.

***Caseload:** Worker can be primary on up to 10 licensed family cases or up to 10 adoption cases. Worker can be assigned 4 new home studies. Following completion of month six, the worker can be assigned up to 20 licensed family cases, or 15 adoption cases, or 15 home studies.*

Level 4: Mentor (A year or more after NET)

- Mentor can maintain own caseload while providing some support to newer staff;
- Mentor provides accurate documentation;
- Mentor is willing and able to slow down to demonstrate steps in the case;
- Mentor can answer questions about processes in the case; and
- Mentor has demonstrated significant growth in multiple core competencies.

***Caseload:** Mentor is primary on own cases, as well as the cases that Level 1-2 workers are secondary on. No more than 20 licensed family cases, or 15 adoption cases, or 15 home studies.*

IN-HOME SERVICES

Level 1: Shadowing (1-2 months after NET)

- Worker has completed New Employee Training (NET);
- Worker can briefly explain the steps of a case from a checklist (e.g., case transfer; family assessment);
- Worker demonstrates accurate documentation when shadowing a mentor;
- Worker asks appropriate follow-up questions during debrief with mentor; and
- Worker has a basic understanding of core competencies and can identify at least one strength and one opportunity for growth.

***Caseload:** Worker can be added as primary on up to 2 cases that will be transferred to them.*

Level 2: Being Shadowed (3-4 months after NET)

- Worker demonstrates effective engagement with families;
- Worker can move through the cases with minimal direction from mentor;
- Worker can determine follow-up steps from questions asked in supervision;
- Worker can document case in FACTS with limited direction; and
- Worker has increased understanding of core competencies and has identified growth in at least one area.

***Caseload:** Worker can be assigned as primary on up to 4 cases.*

Level 3: Working Independently (5-6 months after NET)

- Worker demonstrates fidelity to policy and procedures;
- Worker can explain to supervisor anticipated steps in assessing a family and helping meet their needs;
- Worker can articulate when to contact supervisor for next steps;
- Worker can complete documentation in FACTS with minimal guidance;
- Worker can anticipate and plan for changing needs of the client/family during the life of the case;

- Worker makes appropriate referrals; and
- Worker continues to identify areas of growth in core competencies.

Caseload: Worker is primary on most cases. Worker can be primary on up to 6 cases. Following month 6, the worker may carry no more than 8 cases.

Level 4: Mentor (A year or more after NET)

- Mentor can maintain own caseload while providing some support to newer staff;
- Mentor provides accurate documentation;
- Mentor is willing and able to slow down to demonstrate steps in the case;
- Mentor can answer questions about processes in the case; and
- Mentor has demonstrated significant growth in multiple core competencies.

Caseload: Worker is primary on no more than 8 cases. When the new worker is at Level 1 or 2 and assigned as primary, the Mentor may be assigned as secondary.

RETENTION

INTRODUCTION

In previous sections, the importance of recruiting and hiring staff who are a “good fit” with Protective Services work was discussed at length. Equally important is nurturing a supportive, trauma-responsive workplace culture that emphasizes professional development, accountability, and ongoing growth and learning. CYFD is committed to hiring the right people who stay with the agency.

BUILDING A CULTURE OF SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

DATA-INFORMED ANALYSIS OF EXIT SURVEY DATA

Together, Human Resources and Workforce Development are evaluating the current process of collecting exit survey data and determining a more robust method of data collection that is focused on collecting data that points CYFD toward making needed changes or adjustments to the factors that lead to employees departing. This is the planning phase. A new process of data collection will be designed and executed by the end of January 2023. It will include departing employees being offered a one-to-one exit interview with the CYFD Human Resources Director in addition to completing an electronic exit survey. Each month data will be reviewed and compared to previous data for trends that can be addressed through organizational changes. Issues that arise regarding a specific leader or area will be approached by the leader or areas director. Accountability measures will be designed and enacted to ensure changes that may have contributed to employees' departure. Human Resources will follow up on and monitor needed changes.

CRITICAL INCIDENT REVIEWS

All child fatalities and some serious injuries are currently reviewed by the Quality Assurance Unit in the Division of Performance and Accountability. These reviews involve a thorough reading of the case record (prior investigations, safety assessments, intervention history, services referred, safety planning, etc.) as well as interviews with key staff involved in the case, both presently and historically. The product is typically a factual accounting of agency efforts with the family prior to and during the critical incident.

The objective of the review process is not to cast blame for an incident. Failure to follow policy, procedure or other protocol may be noted in the review, which can feel punitive to an already grieving or stressed worker or supervisor. Realigning the review effort to identify systemic issues and actionable strategies is a more effective and less-traumatizing way to reduce the likelihood of critical incidents, especially when failures of external systems are identified as well.

In the winter of 2022, CYFD partnered with national consultant Collaborate Safety, LLC, to review five recent fatalities using a safety science approach. Collaborate Safety took the agency's Critical Incident Reviews a step further and asked additional questions of the stakeholders on each case to better identify some of the systemic factors that may have impacted the case outcome. Additionally, they held “mapping sessions” with staff at all levels of the agency to further explore some of the challenges that can lead to poor outcomes. Several of their recommendations are embedded within this Plan. CYFD is restructuring its Critical Incident Review process to address these systemic issues. In early 2023 it will engage in a pilot process to develop and implement an effective follow-up procedure with local offices. The goal is to maintain accountability for agency failures while facing systemic challenges more courageously. Assigning blame is not an effective way to reduce fatalities and other serious incidents.

USE OF DATA TO ASSESS PERFORMANCE

CYFD is committed to continuous evolution as a data-driven organization. Quantitative indicators are crucial to understanding agency performance at the statewide and county levels.

The most commonly used data analytics tool for Protective Services, Results-Oriented Management (ROM), includes a host of federal and management indicators across all service delivery areas. It allows the user to “drill down” to the county office, supervisor, and individual levels. While this can be helpful in understanding geographic differences in certain outcomes for children and families, the numbers do lack context when compared at the individual level and doing so can feel unnecessarily punitive to staff. Starting in State Fiscal Year 2023, performance evaluations will not use this tool to evaluate employee performance. Individual-level data indicators may be used to target training needs and professional development but must consider caseloads, case complexity, and other factors when reviewing with individual workers and supervisors.

The Office of Performance and Accountability will develop and implement training for managers to better understand commonly referenced data indicators, how they are calculated; and how to use them to target performance goals.

NAVIGATING SYSTEMS OF CARE FOR CLINICAL CHALLENGES

The Workforce Development Bureau is currently collaborating with CYFD Behavioral Health Division and the New Mexico Human Services Department to create an e-learning module that provides staff with the knowledge needed to navigate an increasingly complex system of service delivery. The training will include basic information about Medicaid, needs assessment, linking with the agency's Community Behavioral Health Clinicians, working with Managed Care Organizations, troubleshooting gaps in service provision, identifying appropriate placements, and discharge planning. This e-learning module is still in development but will be available to staff no later than spring 2023.

ADDRESSING SECONDARY TRAUMA

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

A large body of research has established that child welfare work is awash in the potential for secondary trauma for its workforce. This can occur over time with daily contact with struggling children and families, however, is especially pertinent to staff retention when frontline workers are faced with egregious cases that involve fatalities or serious injuries. Other circumstances that may be outside of the control of the agency's actions—such as mass killing events, natural disasters, or other tragedies impacting entire communities can also affect staff's ability to navigate their work.

CYFD has always promoted rhetoric that emphasizes the importance of addressing secondary trauma but has never had a strategic, standardized way of responding to it. Over the next 18 months, the agency plans to implement a model of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) to respond quickly and effectively when staff are coping with traumatic events. CISM will be fully implemented by July 1, 2024.

CISM is a process developed and trained by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Inc. (ICISF), a non-profit organization dedicated to providing “education, training, consultation, and support services in comprehensive crisis intervention and disaster behavioral health services to emergency responders and other professionals, organizations, and communities worldwide.” Detailed information about ICISF is provided on its website at <https://icisf.org/>.

The goals of CISM include “helping healthy and functioning people to remain healthy and functioning” in the wake of a traumatic event. It is intended to be a swift injection of assessment and emotional first aid when a tragedy occurs. The model also includes a component of pre-incident education to better prepare staff and their leaders to respond to one another appropriately and supportively if a crisis happens.

Trained CISM teams can be dispatched to provide support for staff in the wake of incidents such as a child death or serious injury; assaults, threats, or other harm to staff members in the line of duty; incidents involving intense media coverage; lawsuits linked to discharge of duties; and other threats to staff well-being as requested and with the concurrence of local office leadership. Training includes both individual-level interventions as well as group facilitation to provide support to entire county teams who are affected by secondary trauma. The peer support model will enable the agency to respond in a non-judgmental, non-punitive manner that can provide empathy and skill-building when staff need it most.

CISM, a team-response model, was effectively implemented in Louisiana and recruits its members from within the workforce. Team members are recruited and assembled based on the recommendation of supervisors and managers; educational background and other credentials; experience; and job performance. New Mexico will explore implementing CISM using a similar model. A CISM model is currently being implemented with the help of contractor Craig Pierce, PhD., of Southwest Family Guidance Center and Institute.

In addition to addressing secondary trauma, CYFD is implementing avenues for increasing overall staff wellness. A licensed clinical therapist has been reassigned to the Office of the Secretary to provide personal therapy to staff, critical incident debriefing and support, assistance with navigating the statewide Employee Assistance Program, wellness training, and other initiatives to increase employee wellness based on nationwide research.

Additionally, a high-level committee has been created to work towards developing a fearless organization. An ongoing complaint from staff is that they don't feel safe asking questions, making mistakes, learning on the job, and engaging in other vulnerable behaviors. This environment increases their overall stress and decreases their wellness. The CISM committee has identified literature with specific methods of implementing this culture change and will be meeting on a regular basis to begin implementing recommendations.

ENHANCING STAFF CAPACITY FOR SELF-CARE

A significant number of employee survey respondents mentioned a lack of meaningful self-care as a major issue in their job satisfaction that may impact retention. Specifically, many staff noted in their comments that the agency pays "lip service" to the importance of self-care but that there are obstacles to truly embracing it as a core value. For example, staff felt that the time off they are given is adequate, but that utilizing the time does not lead to genuinely restorative self-care because they do not feel their pending cases are handled sufficiently while they are out of the office. Additionally, they return from leave only to find a stressful avalanche of work that they must catch up on, potentially undermining the benefit of utilizing their leave.

While vacancies and turnover can make it difficult to cover caseloads for staff while they are on leave, managers and supervisors must strategize ways to minimize these issues.

More day-to-day practices that can help staff maximize self-care include checking in during supervision about workers' work-life balance and symptoms of burnout; providing dedicated time to staff to develop their individualized self-care plans; and ensuring that pre-approved time off to participate in self-care activities is viewed as crucial to staff well-being.

Plans to ensure that all staff can use and enjoy their earned leave must be included in County Retention Plans. This could, for example, be achieved through office teamwork and thoughtful planning to ensure workers' caseloads are sufficiently covered in their absence.

In the spring of 2022, the Workforce Development Bureau collaborated with Dr. Carrie O. Graham of Carrie O. Graham Learning & Solutions (COGLAS), LLC, to develop a comprehensive manual for leaders. This manual provides activities leaders can facilitate to build resiliency and promote self-care. Training for leaders will be facilitated before the end of January 2023. The training will provide instruction on effectively facilitating the activities and assess the need for resilience-building or self-care activities.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

While all New Mexico state employees utilize the same format for annual employee and manager evaluations, performance evaluation, in general, should not be limited to a once-per-year endeavor. It should be embedded in supervisory consultation and day-to-day interactions between supervisors and staff.

Graduated caseloads are based on the developing competencies of newer staff to take on more responsibility for self-sufficient work. These competencies should be incorporated into the agency's Supervisory Framework Model to help supervisors and managers identify opportunities for employee growth as well as strengths. This will help supervisors revisit those performance areas that need continued work, celebrate newly acquired knowledge and skills, and pave the way for employees' evolving independence. Worker competencies for graduated caseloads are presented in detail above.

COUNTY RETENTION PLANS

The County Retention Plan encompasses unique County Retention plans to be created and submitted annually (January 31st of each year). These plans will use turnover data and survey responses disaggregated to the county level (presented in summary to protect confidentiality) and ask county managers and supervisors to identify specific ways they will foster worker self-care, address job dissatisfaction, and enhance supervision and training for worker self-efficacy.

County and regional leadership will be highly encouraged to work with their frontline staff directly to address issues with morale in their office that may impact retention, and actively seek their input when creating these plans.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Central to a supported, competent, and engaged workforce is leadership from supervisors to executives that nurtures staff inquisitiveness, self-efficacy, critical thinking, and introspection. Good leadership also keeps the agency’s mission front and center, embraces change and practice improvement, and works collaboratively across systems at all levels.

Solid leadership skills can develop naturally or through experience. Too often, though, qualified supervisors, managers, and other team leaders are not given the knowledge and skills to be successful until they are in a formal leadership role. CYFD will spend the next year developing leadership training and mentorship opportunities for new leaders and staff who seek advancement within the agency, eventually resulting in a diverse pool of talent from which to recruit leadership for a variety of roles. Participation in leadership development will not guarantee promotion, however, it will prepare individuals as leaders in their current roles and for future roles they may apply for.

SUPERVISORY PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

CYFD partnered with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to develop a supervisory practice framework, including core competencies for field worker supervisors and the accompanying training. The workgroup was led by Annie E. Casey consultants and done in partnership with Protective Services leadership, with multiple supervisors and managers participating in the workgroup. The Supervisory Practice Framework was developed and rolled out in early 2021.

The curriculum was developed based on the competencies identified and feedback from the workgroup and Protective Services supervisors and managers, including County Office Managers, Regional Managers, Bureau Chiefs, Deputy Directors and Director. All Protective Services supervisors and managers were trained in the framework between February and April 2021. Managers (County Office Managers, Regional Managers, Bureau Chiefs, Deputy Directors, and Director) were provided with 3 coaching sessions to support their development of a plan for implementing the new Supervisory Practice Framework in their offices. The coaching sessions were completed in June 2021. The training is now part of the ongoing training calendar.

A steering committee continues to meet to create different events and materials to support the full implementation of the framework into the common practice of Protective Services supervisors. All new supervisors are required to complete the training within three months of their hire date. CYFD employees can opt to take the training prior to being hired as a supervisor. The implementation of the Supervisory Practice Framework is being monitored by a monthly survey of Supervisors/Managers and employees, which was implemented in April 2021. Data are collected, analyzed, and distributed to leadership monthly.

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Opportunities to develop leadership skills should not only be present when staff are given a promotion. Learning should be an ongoing, career-long journey. Training opportunities that are based on the agency’s mission and leadership competencies are available to all new and existing leaders and staff who are interested in developing their leadership skills. This approach ensures that those who step into advanced roles are prepared with the competencies needed to be successful.

Leadership Competencies, previously developed by Protective Services, along with National Child Welfare Workforce Institute’s leadership competencies, will be used to determine gaps in offerings. The National Child Welfare Workforce Institute has published a helpful leadership competency framework

that delineates the skills and motivations of different levels of leadership, from caseworker to executive. Comparing current CYFD Leadership Competencies and the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute's competencies will lead to the development of specific new training over the next year. CYFD is currently identifying courses to be developed to add to the menu of leadership training offered in addition to the Supervisory Training Framework and offered by the New Mexico State Personnel Office. The new courses will exist to build the identified leadership competencies. This work is just beginning. By May 31, 2023, a comprehensive list of new courses to be built, organized by their intended audiences, will be available.

Starting in January 2024, each level of leadership will be assigned a customized learning plan that meets the competencies of that position. New leaders will have one year to complete their learning plan, post completing the Supervisory Framework, which is to be completed within 90 days of hire or promotion. Existing leaders will have until September 2024 to complete any incomplete modules.

The offerings will continue to be evaluated each year to ensure that they meet the current learning needs of CYFD leaders and align with the CYFD's Mission and Vision.

In addition, the Protective Services leadership team, including the director, deputy directors, regional managers, bureau chiefs and managing children's court attorneys, began working with Annie E. Casey on leadership development in May 2022. This partnership and work is designed to enhance understanding and the building of roles, responsibilities, and competencies of each level of leadership.

LEADERSHIP MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The Leadership Mentorship Program is designed to pair experienced leaders into learning partnerships focused on the growth and development of less experienced leaders. Those selected as mentors will be seasoned leaders that consistently demonstrate competencies and are considered high performers and exemplary role models. They have well-developed organizational relationships and CYFD knowledge and are ready and able to share their relative experiences. The mentor is a facilitative partner in the evolving relationship and is responsive to the mentee's unique qualities and needs within the organization's context. The mentee participates as an active learner. The relationship is considered confidential, giving the mentee a safe place to learn and grow.

The following points further describe the mentoring process. One-to-one mentoring provides medium to long-term support, which maximizes an individual's potential and enhances their performance. It is an individualized process that specifically addresses the needs of the mentee. Meeting regularly, the mentor supports the mentee in working with the issues of being a supervisor/leader in the complex environment of CYFD. The mentor helps the individual to improve their skills, knowledge base, and actions to be more effective and satisfied in their role.

This program will be piloted with a small group of leaders beginning in April 2023. The pilot will last six months and be evaluated for effectiveness. A pre-mentoring assessment of the mentee's leadership knowledge and skills will be administered at the start of the relationship and again at the end of the six months. A control group of non-participating new leaders will also be administered the assessment to allow for comparative data. The findings of the assessment will be used to determine the next steps.

ASPIRING LEADERS

Starting in June of 2023, non-supervisory or leader-level staff that aspire to become leaders will be offered the opportunity to meet with a coach or WDB trainer to design a customized learning plan to help prepare them for leadership opportunities. This will not guarantee advancement but create a pipeline of trained staff prepared for future leadership roles.

DATA-DRIVEN EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

In 2015, Protective Services implemented the Striving Toward Excellence Program (STEP), a "data scholars" workshop training that provided basic data literacy training to county-level dyads of managers

and supervisors. The program expanded in subsequent years to include line workers and central office program staff. The program was highly successful in shifting the agency to a more data-driven culture that embraced continuous quality improvement and county-level accountability; most of its participants went on to receive promotions within the division. STEP continued through 2019 and was later discontinued due to the COVID pandemic and competing resources.

Based on a recommendation from the collaborative Safety review, as well as a significant turnover of leadership staff since its inception, CYFD has recognized a need to bring back a similar program. With the myriad new metrics now being tracked through the Kevin S Settlement, there is more data available than ever to better understand how individual case decisions, processes, and practices can impact outcomes for children and families. The Office of Performance and Accountability will begin revamping the STEP curriculum to suit the agency's emerging needs and priorities to be implemented in 2024. Work will begin in February of 2023, with an estimated project plan development date of May 2023.

COMPENSATION

INTRODUCTION

Adequate compensation was the top issue identified in the staff survey related to retention. It is true that Protective Services field staff have difficult jobs to do: They encounter hostile clientele; must respond to crises quickly and effectively; experience secondary trauma; and must make sound decisions regarding competing priorities within short, finite timeframes. They are also expected to continuously develop skills and improve their practice with the most vulnerable in their community. Additionally, survey results, as well as national research, indicate that staff often feel undervalued by society at large and by their own organization.

A comparison of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculator for select New Mexico communities shown below and mid-point pay for frontline caseworker roles within the agency also below illustrates the problem with current pay rates in terms of the impact of competitive salaries in the private sector or other sectors of government (such as education or public safety).

Living Wage* (per MIT Living Wage Calculator)									
Bernalillo	Chaves	Dona Ana	Lea	McKinley	Rio Arriba	San Miguel	Santa Fe	Socorro	Taos
\$31.86	\$31.66	\$30.27	\$32.60	\$30.42	\$30.65	\$30.86	\$32.87	\$30.53	\$31.79

*Living Wage Calculator uses Living Wage for 1 adult and 1 child.

Job Title	Salary Band	Hourly Minimum	Hourly Midpoint
Investigation Caseworker	SE	\$19.58	\$25.45
Investigation Senior Worker	SF	\$22.01	\$28.61
Investigation Supervisor	SG	\$25.68	\$33.39
Permanency Planning Caseworker	SD	\$17.25	\$22.42
Permanency Planning Senior Worker	SE	\$19.58	\$25.45
Permanency Planning Supervisor	SF	\$22.01	\$28.61
Placement Caseworker	SD	\$17.25	\$22.42
Placement Senior Worker	SE	\$19.58	\$25.45
Placement Supervisor	SF	\$22.01	\$28.61
In-Home Services Worker	SE	\$19.58	\$25.45
In-Home Services Supervisor	SF	\$22.01	\$28.61

PAY EQUITY AS A RETENTION TOOL

CYFD requested approximately \$12M in its FY24 budget request to implement pay adjustments agency-wide to appropriately place staff within their specific pay bands based on their education and experience. There are currently inequities in pay based on situations like the need to hire new staff at higher rates of pay than veteran staff so that they will accept the positions. Pay inequities reduce morale, increase turnover, and make it harder to recruit. It is anticipated that this effort will have a significant positive impact agency-wide.

Furthermore, Protective Services is currently in the process of implementing 10% pay differentials to front-line, client services staff as a recruitment and retention tool. This initiative is being self-funded from the FY23 budget. It is anticipated that these immediate increases will also have a significant

positive impact in recruitment and retention.

It may be that the single most important action that CYFD (and by extension, the state) can take to improve worker morale and decrease turnover is to improve pay disparities and implement automatic pay increases for those staff who demonstrate commitment to the agency and continue to gain valuable experience in their roles.

In the last several years, the state legislature has approved some incremental pay increases either for state employees as a whole or for broad sectors of state government (e.g., law enforcement or teachers). Currently, the only mechanism for Protective Services staff to obtain a raise within Protective Service is to seek out a promotional job change. While this can be helpful in filling supervisory and management roles with qualified candidates, it also creates an internal turnover, which continuously leaves some crucial direct-service positions in the hands of less-experienced staff. Competition for limited advancement opportunities can also leave competent, qualified staff feeling “edged out” and unappreciated, especially in counties where few supervisory positions exist.

CYFD must tirelessly advocate before the legislature and other decision-makers that retention is a money-saving strategy. For example, CYFD estimates that, depending on prior experience, it costs between \$12,843 and \$25,686, excluding benefits to onboard (train and integrate) a new investigation worker.

Additionally, as workers gain experience, skills, and knowledge, they add value to the organization. They can handle a full caseload, mentor less-experienced workers, engage in more informed community outreach, and engage with children and families more effectively. This has the very real potential impact of reducing trauma, minimizing repeat system involvement, and reducing the time children spend in foster care. This will become especially true with the agency’s ongoing commitment to emphasizing prevention work.

An idea currently being investigated and researched is the feasibility of implementing a regular salary increases for field staff to acknowledge and reward longevity and additional degrees and licensure. There are various complications with implementing this type of plan, including the fact that funding would have to be appropriated each year by the legislature. A plan would also have to be negotiated with the union. The following strategies are being discussed as appropriate requirements for receiving a longevity raise:

- Probationary status completed;
- Annual performance reviews indicating worker achieves all performance standards;
- Annual performance reviews that identify areas of skill-building for the worker over the following year;
- All required pre-service and annual mandatory trainings completed; and
- Nine hours of elective training completed each year of employment (the Workforce Development Bureau currently offers several optional trainings, with a plan to expand this menu in the next two years, including leadership skills training).

Department leadership are continuing to pursue options for additional pay incentives while advocating for broader systemic solutions to pay inequities.

TIMELINE FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTIVITIES

Activity	Responsible Lead	Est. Begin Date	Est. End Date
Establish a plan to specialize placement staff	PAR Bureau Chief; PS Director; work team members	October 2022	May 2023
Set meeting series with IV-E stipend partners	Workforce Development Bureau Chief	January 2023	Ongoing
"Listening Tour" with higher education administrators	CYFD Cabinet Secretary	September 2022	Ongoing
County Recruitment Plans	County Office Managers	January 2023	Updated annually
Establish Hiring Protocol Workgroup	TBD; Led by Director of Data and Evaluation	October 2022	March 2023
Realistic Job Preview Task Force	Workforce Development Bureau Chief	January 2023	October 2023
Role-Specific Mentoring Model & Manuals	Workforce Development Bureau Chief	August 2022	January 2023
Systems of Care Navigation Training	Workforce Development Bureau Chief	October 2022	April 2023
Critical Incident Stress Management Kickoff	Director of Data and Evaluation	November 2022	June 2023
County Retention Plans	County Office Managers	January 2023	Updated annually
Leadership Development Program	Workforce Development Bureau Chief	March 2023	December 2023
Leadership Mentorship Program Pilot	Workforce Development Bureau Chief	March 2023	December 2023
Resiliency and Self-Care Manual	Workforce Development Bureau Chief	April 2022	February 2023
Data-Driven Excellence Program	Director of Data and Evaluation	March 2023	January 2024

APPENDIX 1: STAFF SURVEY RESULTS BY DOMAIN, SURVEY ITEM, AND WEIGHTED GAP ANALYSIS (WGA) SCORE

WGA Score	Domain	Survey Item	WGA Score
0.986	Training & Professional Development	I received adequate training prior to performing my job.	0.393
		I have regular opportunities for ongoing job-related training.	0.092
		Professional development is a priority for staff in my office.	0.175
		There are adequate opportunities for advancement in this organization.	0.288
		This organization can provide other career opportunities, such as support to obtain independent licensure.	0.038
1.546	Organizational Factors	There is a lot of flexibility in how I can go about successfully performing my job.	0.184
		I am consulted, when possible, about work decisions that may affect me.	0.368
		The "chain of command" within the agency is generally clear and sensible.	0.296
		Rules, policies, and procedures are interpreted and applied in a consistent way.	0.484
		I am able to take care of personal or family issues flexibly, without fear of reprisal.	0.214
0.820	Job-Related Safety	Adequate safety measures have been implemented in and around my office.	0.091
		Safety is a priority for middle and upper management.	0.225
		I seldom feel threatened by hostile clientele on the job.	0.191
		Staff are encouraged to partner with coworkers or law enforcement in the field when appropriate.	0.066
		There is a clear emergency protocol in my office.	0.248
1.559	Workload & Expectations	I am usually able to keep up with my workload within a regular work week.	0.402
		When the workload is heavy, my supervisor is supportive and understanding.	0.243
		My day-to-day tasks are generally limited to my understood job description.	0.229
		When extra work needs to be done, it is distributed fairly among those able to do it.	0.397
		My workload is such that I am able to perform my job to my own and others' standards.	0.287
1.596	Self-Care	I am generally able to balance my work with my personal life.	0.389
		Self-care is encouraged and facilitated in my office.	0.246
		My direct supervisor routinely checks in with me about self-care strategies.	0.275
		My office has a debriefing protocol in place for circumstances that are likely to cause secondary trauma.	0.416
		I feel I am able to take an appropriate amount of time off without fear of reprisal.	0.270

WGA Score	Domain	Survey Item	WGA Score
0.051	Physical Working Conditions	My office is physically comfortable.	0.079
		My office building and the vicinity are well-maintained.	-0.052
		I have the material resources needed to perform my job duties.	0.068
		Problems with the physical work environment are handled promptly.	0.030
		My office building--including reception and visitation areas--is kept clean and sanitary.	-0.073
1.320	Workplace Cohesion	Staff in my office work effectively as a team.	0.246
		Unfairness and favoritism are not usually a problem in my workplace.	0.384
		When staff in my office have an issue with a coworker, most will address it directly with that person and avoid talking behind his/her back.	0.408
		Staff in my office are always willing to help each other out.	0.150
		In my workplace, coworkers take care of each other and provide emotional support when needed.	0.132
0.769	Agency Mission	This agency has a clear mission and strong values.	0.173
		I feel I am a good fit with this agency and its overall purpose.	0.078
		I feel committed to this agency for the foreseeable future.	0.147
		Agency leadership is genuinely dedicated to progress and improvements where needed.	0.344
		I feel the specific job I perform contributes to the agency's overall purpose.	0.028
1.472	Rewards & Recognition	The compensation (salary and benefits) I receive is competitive with similar positions with other organizations.	0.564
		I feel that my job-related successes are recognized and appreciated.	0.355
		I receive more positive feedback than negative feedback.	0.134
		The corrective feedback I receive is constructive and non-punitive.	0.189
		The work I do is valued by society.	0.230
0.594	Supervision Frequency & Availability	I have regular, dedicated time set up for one-on-one supervision.	0.132
		Scheduled supervision usually happens as scheduled and is rarely canceled.	0.136
		My supervision sessions are rarely interrupted.	0.108
		I am generally satisfied with the frequency and amount of supervision I receive.	0.106
		My supervisor is generally available to provide unscheduled supervision as needed.	0.112
0.580	Supervision Quality	My supervisor encourages me to think creatively and critically during supervision.	0.101
		My supervisor supports my involvement in case decision-making.	0.079
		My supervisor provides me with good direction related to job tasks and agency procedures.	0.121
		My supervisor provides me with effective emotional support when appropriate.	0.149
		My supervisor empowers me be competent and effective in my job.	0.131

APPENDIX 2: CYFD Methodology, Data, and Analysis to Develop Projections of Staff Needed to Meet Caseload Standards

This document serves to memorialize the strategy and logic used in creating CYFD’s Enterprise Project Management Office’s (EPMO) calculation tool for determining Protective Services (PS) field staff needed to meet agreed-upon caseload standards. In order to achieve a funded vacancy factor of 9.45%, we will need to add 45 of the 50 positions Protective Services anticipates receiving from the legislature for FY24. This will increase the total number of positions to 475 with vacancies counted at 196 at the start of FY24.

CYFD’s target 2023 caseloads, outlined in the following chart, are in alignment with the Child Welfare League of America.

<p>Investigation Case Workers</p>	<p>In 2023 and beyond the standard caseload standard will be no more than 12 cases (families) total; there will be no primary assignments in the first 2 months after completion of New Employee Training (NET); no more than 3 primary assignments at a time during months 3-4 after NET; and no more than 6 primary assignments at a time during months 5-6 after NET.</p>
<p>Permanency Planning Workers</p>	<p>There will be a maximum of 15 children on a caseload at a time; workers will be assigned as primary for no more than 5 children at a time for the 2 months after completion of NET (only transferred cases); no more than 8 primary assignments at a time during months 3-4 after NET (can include new cases); and no more than 12 primary assignments at a time during months 5-6 after NET.</p>
<p>Placement Workers</p>	<p>Effective July 1, 2022, the caseload standard for Placement Workers will be equal to: 15 adoption cases, or 20 licensed families, or 15 home studies. For workers with mixed caseloads, the standard will weight each piece of work. For example, each adoption case would equal 6.67% of a caseload (1 caseload divided by 15); each family would equal 5% of a caseload, and each home study would equal 6.67% of a caseload. There will be no more than 3-5 licensed family or adoption assignments to workers in months 1-2 following NET. No more than one home study will be assigned in months 1-2 following NET once a worker has completed the SAFE Home Study Training. No more than 5-8 licensed family or adoption cases and not more than 2 new home studies will be assigned during months 3-4 following NET, and no more than 10 licensed family or adoption cases and not more than 4 new home studies will be assigned during months 5-6 after NET. Following completion of month six, the worker can be assigned no more than 20 licensed family cases, or 15 adoption cases, or 15 home studies.</p>
<p>In-Home Services</p>	<p>No more than 8 families assigned at a time. No more than 2 assignments during months 1-2 following completion of NET; no more than 4 case assignments during months 3-4 following NET; and no more than 6 cases during months 5-6 following NET.</p>

Using numerous reports from the Cross-Divisional Data Units (CDDU) and the Human Resources Data Analyst, the EPMO estimated the number of full-time non-supervisory employees (FTEs) needed to meet the caseload standards described above, by county and region, based on historical caseload data to inform the specific hiring plan required by the FSA.

After initial discussion of methodology with the Co-Neutrals, the EPMO requested and received a 2022 monthly caseload data set from the CDDU for Permanency, Placement, and Investigations. The data was used to calculate the number of non-supervisory FTEs needed to meet the Investigation, Permanency and Placement¹ caseload standards describe above, by county and region. For each the needed FTEs was estimated by dividing the number of cases/children each month by the standard (e.g., by dividing the number of permanency cases by 15). EPMO produced estimates using a range of caseload counts: high, medium, low and average caseload sizes for each of the PS Field Offices (County Office).

In-Home Services worker caseloads are capped at 8 families at any given time. CYFD has adequate capacity (positions and funding) to meet the caseload standard for In-Home Services workers.

Based on feedback from the Co-Neutrals, the EPMO settled on a final estimate of the non-supervisory FTEs needed to meet the caseload standard for Permanency, Placement and Investigations, reflecting the FTEs needed using the maximum caseloads observed plus a 10 percent workforce factor to account for turnover, temporary absences, mixed caseloads, and graduated caseloads.

The EPMO also graphed each of the historical monthly caseload data sets to look for any discernable trends in the data that would assist in decision-making for training, hiring, and recruiting. While Permanency and Placement presented as a relatively flat distribution, the Investigations data presents noticeable trends that should be further reviewed to assist decision-making.

Lastly, the EPMO met with the Director of Performance and Accountability for a quality assurance and quality control check to ensure the data was valid and able to be reproduced. Once approved and finalized, this tool will be monitored by the CDDU for monthly maintenance and updating.

.The sum total of all positions needed as determined by CYFD is remarkably similar to total number of needed positions estimated using the methodology recommended by the Co-Neutrals. The agreed-upon total filled position needed to reach the target caseloads for Investigations, Permanency, and Placement classifications is 430, which CYFD already has. Currently, 279 of the 430 positions are filled and 151 are vacant. In order to achieve a funded vacancy factor of 9.45%, we will need to add 45 of the 50 positions Protective Services anticipates receiving from the legislature for FY24.

The 475 positions will be rebalanced throughout the state as necessary to result in the target caseload numbers per staff.

The calculation tool has the ability to drill down to the county office level and will be an important tool for management utilization to fill gaps within each county office to continually right size the caseloads.

¹ For this analysis, EPMO used a proxy for the placement standard that; due to current data limitations the number of FTEs needed was calculated using a simple 1:17 caseload standard rather than separately assessing each component of placement workers' responsibilities. In future years the Co-Neutrals have suggested refining this approach to more accurately reflect the agreed-upon standard.

Data set agreed upon by CYFD with 50 new positions from Leg session added					
<i>Data reflects 2023 Stds w/high caseload and supervisors not carrying a caseload and a 10% relief factor.</i>	Current Inv Staff All Counties	Current Perm Staff All Counties	Current Place Staff All Counties		
	116	105	42		
	Staff Needs 2023				
	75	26	27		
	Total Staff Need for 2023 Std (Current + Hiring need)				
	191	131	69		
Relief Factor of 10%	210	144	76		
Sum total all Staff Needed	430				Vacancy Factor
Sum Total Current Staff		279			9.45%
Sub Total Funded vacant Positions (as of Dec) w/additional 50 Funded vacant positions added		196			
Total FY24 Available Funded Positions		475			
Additional needed funded vacancies		(45)			
		In summary: 5 positions will need to be dedicated to these roles. We will have 45 extra vacant positions by including 50 newly funded positions.			

APPENDIX 3: COUNTY-LEVEL SUPERVISOR-TO-STAFF RATIOS (BASED ON FTE)

County, Region, & State	Total Field Positions	Workers per Supervisor (County-Level)	INV WRK R/SUP	PPW WRKR/SUP	PLMT WRKR/SUP	IHS/IFIS WRKR/SUP
Cibola	11	4.5	3.0	8.0	2.0	n/a
McKinley	14	6.0	4.0	10.0	4.0	n/a
San Juan	27	4.4	4.5	5.3	3.0	4.0
Sandoval	22	4.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	n/a
Torrance	8	3.0	2.0	4.0	2.0	n/a
Valencia	24	5.0	6.0	4.5	5.0	n/a
Region 1: Northwest	106	4.6	4.0	5.3	3.6	n/a
Colfax, Union	7	6.0	6.0	4.0	COM Supervises	n/a
Rio Arriba, Los Alamos	15	4.0	4.0	5.0	2.0	n/a
San Miguel, Guadalupe, Mora	17	3.3	4.0	5.0	2.0	2.0
Santa Fe	22	3.4	2.7	4.0	3.0	n/a
Taos	12	5.0	3.0	2.0	COM Supervises	n/a
Region 2: Northeast	73	3.9	3.4	4.0	3.3	8.0
Region 3: Metro	172	4.5	4.0	5.6	4.6	3.3
Chaves	24	3.8	4.0	3.0	3.0	n/a
Curry	19.5	4.6	5.0	5.0	6.0	3.0
Eddy	18	5.0	5.0	6.0	3.0	n/a
Lea	23	3.6	3.0	3.5	4.0	n/a
Quay, DeBaca, Harding	5.5	2.7	3.0	n/a	2.0	n/a
Roosevelt	5	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	n/a
Region 4: Southeast	95	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.5	7.0
Dona Ana	54.5	4.7	5.0	4.3	4.0	6.0
Grant, Catron	11	4.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	n/a
Lincoln	5.5	2.7	2.0	n/a	2.0	n/a
Luna, Hidalgo	7	6.0	6.0	4.0	COM Supervises	n/a
Otero	17.5	6.0	6.0	5.0	4.0	n/a
Sierra	3	2.0	2.0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Socorro	6.5	3.3	6.0	2.0	2.0	n/a
Region 5: Southwest	105	4.5	4.4	4.2	3.7	10.0
New Mexico	551	4.3	4.0	4.8	3.8	6.5

Appendix 4: ICWA/IFPA Training Plan

<p>Tier One: Novice ICWA/IFPA Certificate—22.0 hours</p>	<p>The Novice ICWA/IFPA Certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for: All Protective Services employees—including Children’s Court Attorneys (CCAs), ICWA/IFPA Unit staff and OTA staff. • Timeframe: For new employees, within one year of their hire date; for existing employees, no later than December 31, 2023. • Pre-Requisite: N/A <p>The four courses in the Novice ICWA/IFPA Certificate meet the requirements of the Kevin S. Settlement Agreement Appendix C Target Outcome 5.1. These courses provide information about why ICWA/IFPA was enacted, why it remains relevant today and ICWA/IFPA’s specific requirements. The courses help staff build skills for working with Native American communities and families in culturally respectful ways and for employing engagement strategies with Native American communities.</p>	
<p>Course #1</p>	<p>Cultural Humility in Social Services</p>	<p>8.0 hours</p>
<p>Course #2</p>	<p>Populations of New Mexico</p>	<p>3.0 hours</p>
<p>Course #3</p>	<p>Indian Child Welfare Act Overview (e-learning) - Best Practices for Best Outcomes</p>	<p>3.0 hours</p>
<p>Course #4</p>	<p>ICWA/IFPA In-Depth Training – Applying Best Practices</p>	<p>8.0 hours</p>
<p>Tier Two: Advanced ICWA/IFPA Certificate—12.0 CE hours</p>	<p>This certificate focuses on supervising ICWA/IFPA cases and strengthening community engagement. Required for: ICWA/IFPA Unit Staff, Supervisors, and Managing Attorneys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeframe: Must be completed within eighteen months of their hire date. CYFD staff moving into a supervisory role must complete this Certificate within six months of being promoted. • Pre-Requisite: ICWA/IFPA Novice Worker Certificate. • Note: Employees who are not mandated to complete this certificate may elect to complete the entire Certificate or select specific courses from the Certificate to fulfill the annual requirement of 6 hours of cultural humility training. 	
<p>Course #1</p>	<p>Supervising Indian Child Welfare Act Cases</p>	<p>3.0 hours</p>
<p>Course #2</p>	<p>Community Cultural Wealth</p>	<p>3.0 hours</p>
<p>Course #3</p>	<p>Importance of Cultural Connections</p>	<p>2.0 hours</p>
<p>Course #4</p>	<p>Implications of Historical Trauma—Proficient</p>	<p>2.0 hours</p>
<p>Course #5</p>	<p>Government-to-Government Relations—Proficient</p>	<p>2.0 hours</p>

Tier Three: ICWA/IFPA Leadership Certificate—26.0 hours	<p>Tier Three is designed to develop a leader’s ability to effectively manage staff working with ICWA/IFPA in the field. This Tier provides a deeper understanding of ICWA/IFPA and the communities to it applies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required for: County Office Managers, Regional Managers and Field Deputy Directors. ● Timeframe: Leaders new to CYFD will have twenty-four months from their hire date to complete this Certificate. Leaders promoted from within CYFD will have eighteen months from their promotion to complete the Certificate. Existing leaders will have till November 30, 2023, to complete. ● Pre-requisite: Novice and Advanced ICWA/IFPA Certificates. 	
Course #1	Accountability and ICWA/IFPA: Assuring cultural responsiveness	4.0 hours
Course #2	Accountability and ICWA/IFPA: Assuring ICWA/IFPA compliance	4.0 hours
Course #3	Collaborative Decision-Making	3.0 hours
Course #4	Values-Based Leadership	8.0 hours
Course #5	Creating an Environment of Cultural Humility	3.0 hours
Course #6	Community Engagement	4.0 hours
Children’s Court Attorneys	<p>Children’s Court Attorneys (CCAs) are required to complete the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tier One: Novice ICWA/IFPA Certificate ● CCA Training conducted by the Managing Attorney ● Indian Family Protection Act (IFPA) In-Depth Training ● Essential Information for Practicing and Presiding in Child Welfare Cases (also known as Core Training), a multi-day training offered each August by the Corrine Wolfe Center for Child and Family Justice. The Core Training includes two sessions that address ICWA/IFPA (The Indian Child Welfare and Indian Family Protection Acts in Action—Parts I and II (90 minutes combined), and Collaboration with the Tribes, Nations, and Pueblos—Different Peoples, Different Stories (60 minutes)). 	

**Foster/Resource
Parents**

*Pre-Service Foster/Resource Parent Training (READi NM)—Indian Child Welfare
Module (4 Hours)*

The Pre-Service training is offered regularly within County Offices based on the office's resource parent recruitment strategies and timeline. The pre-service training, a licensing requirement, is offered as needed in alignment with current applications.

The Resource Parent Pre-Service curriculum is a training developed from a collaborative statewide initiative involving CYFD staff experts, past and present resource families, community-based organizations, ICWA/IFPA tribal leaders and representatives, youth in care, and researched best practice initiatives throughout the country. The Pre-service curriculum uses a framework of Understanding by Design which focuses on developing and deepening a learner's ability to make meaning of and transfer learning. Our goal is to provide Pre-Service Resource Families with robust training to equip them with the knowledge and tools necessary to begin their journey in supporting children/youth in care and their families during their process towards reunification.

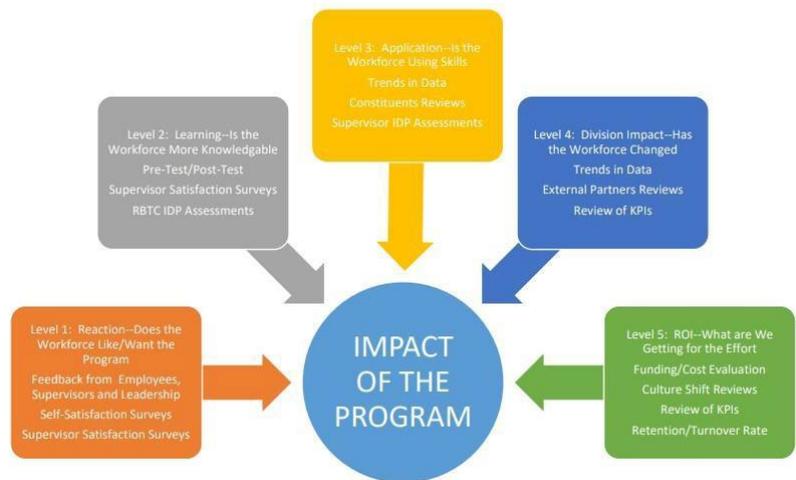
APPENDIX 5: SUMMATIVE EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Implementing the Summative Evaluation Framework will increase the capacity of WDB to demonstrate trainees' comprehension and application post-training.

WDB uses a modified version of the Kirkpatrick Model to measure

1. The reaction to the training
2. The knowledge gained by the workforce
3. The ability of the workforce to apply the knowledge and skills in day-to-day applications
4. The effect the training has on the division (e.g.: Protective Services, Juvenile Services, Behavioral Health Services)
5. The return on investment regarding how the organizational culture is shifting in response to the training endeavor

Workforce Development 5 Levels of Evaluation



All instructional units will include a summative evaluation. Summative evaluations will be in alignment with the course objectives.

	Knowledge-based	Application/skills-based	Evaluation-based
Definition	<p>Knowledge-based training is those that require participants to recall facts and procedures.</p> <p>After taking this type of training, participants should be able to describe/recall/ identify information and appropriate resources.</p>	<p>Application/skills-based training is those that require participants to apply new information.</p> <p>After taking this type of training, participants should be able to apply models/frameworks/ principles to work situations.</p>	<p>Evaluation-based training are those that ask participants to shift their current operating structure and behaviors.</p>
Examples of instructional units	<p>CYFD 101 (NET)</p> <p>Interpretation Services (e-learning)</p> <p>Binti (live and e-learning)</p> <p>Safe sleep (e-learning)</p>	<p>Motivational Interviewing (NET)</p> <p>SOP/SDM (NET)</p>	<p>Trauma-responsive certificates</p> <p>ICWA certificates</p> <p>Culture-shift</p>
Who?	<p>The instructional designer will submit a summative evaluation as part of the curriculum.</p> <p>The participant will</p>	<p>The instructional designer will submit a summative evaluation as part of the curriculum.</p> <p>The participant will</p>	<p>The instructional designer will submit a summative evaluation as part of the curriculum.</p> <p>The trainee's supervisor and regional coach will complete the evaluation.</p>

	complete the summative evaluation.	complete the summative evaluation.	In addition, the trainer will provide input gathered from formative evaluations and interactions in training to coaches and supervisors. This is an opportunity to illustrate student learning and development.
Suggested summative evaluation	Quiz Multiple choice Single attempt with opportunities to review submitted answers and correct answers	Demonstration of skills E.g.: Motivational interview; submission of OJT manual; lab exercises	Appraisal of trainee's behavioral change E.g.: A survey that allows the supervisor and/or coach to rate behavioral changes in trainee
Timeline	The summative evaluation must be completed within 30 days after the training.	The summative evaluation can be completed as part of the training or within 30 days after the training.	The summative evaluation can be administered at the following time markers after the training: 3, 6, 9, 12 months.

WDB Summative Evaluation Framework Guidelines

Summative Evaluation Guidelines	Examples of application
Multiple Means of Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide digital formats of evaluation (allows text to be manipulated, text-to-speech software to be used) • Allow students to utilize resources (e.g.: "open-book" evaluation) • Simplify directions • Clarify vocabulary and symbols • Illustrate through multi-media
Action and Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow alternatives to traditional evaluations and quizzes for students to express or demonstrate their learning (written and oral evaluations, recorded responses, illustrations, diagrams, etc.) • Provide clear expectations and feedback • Provide evaluation embedded in the learning activities • Include an explicit description (rubric) of the criteria for quality work • Provide support for sustaining effort • Provide checklists and project planning templates for understanding the problem, setting up prioritization, sequences, and schedules of steps
Multiple Means of Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer choices of evaluation related to topic and presentation mode • Provide adjustable levels of challenge in type of evaluations provided • Provide authentic, task-based evaluation • Reduce threat by removing time testing constraints • Reduce emphasis on grades